



# The Spice of Life

The essay may be as austere and sublime as a Himalayan peak it may be fun or the prickliest sort of intellectual stimulation its range of subject matter is infinite says *Charles B Shaw in this lively volume*

This varied collection of *American Essays* offers a gem of humor by the irrepressible James Thurber Gilbert Hight's charming vignette on George Washington Walter Lippmann's stirring cry for education toward world responsibility H L Mencken's castigation of the Southern character Joseph Wood Krutch's engaging observations on the month of April, and many more scintillating pieces of writing from America's best authors on many subjects

Ranging from the 18th Century to our own day these brilliant and rewarding essays paint a wonderfully intimate and informal history of America, reflecting its spirit of individualism and belief in the responsibility of the individual to say honestly what he thinks There are hours of reading pleasure in this sparkling anthology of wit and wisdom on topics ranging from politics to nature ~~from history~~ to criticism



# American Essays

*Edited with an introduction  
and notes by*

CHARLES B SHAW



A MENTOR BOOK

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# THE ESSAY IN AMERICA

It is perhaps no more necessary for the anthologist to define an essay than it is required of a bartender that he furnish a chemical analysis with the cocktail he serves. This is not as frivolous or inept a comparison as the frowning and sober-minded might judge. There are readers and imbibers who will find in both components of the analogy similarities of brevity and solace and— at once— stimulation and incitement to mellowness.

Some bidding of orderliness however suggests the wisdom of a definition. That irascible genius who won a part of his mid-eighteenth century bread and butter both by writing essays and by compiling a dictionary defined the essay as "a loose sally of the mind an irregular indigested piece not a regular and orderly composition." Dr. Johnson here apparently barked back some forty years to Addison's opening paragraph of the 249th *Spectator*. "When I make Choice of a Subject that has not been treated on by others I throw together my Reflections on it without any Order or Method so that they may appear rather in the Looseness and Freedom of an Essay than in the Regularity of a Set Discourse."

There is no literary form that embraces so wide a variety of inclusions. Adjectives commonly used to describe the sorts of essays indicate this diversity: familiar, critical, didactic, informal, nature, expository, historical, reflective, travel, personal, descriptive, and humorous are a dozen of these qualifiers. The noun too is varied: article, character sketch, causerie, feuilleton, fantasy, anecdote, paper, satire, miscellany, ephemera, impressions, and reverie are another dozen terms applied to the multifariousness of the essay. The composition that can be thus diversely denoted cannot be rigidly defined. The essay may be as personal as a toupee or as austere and sublime as a Himalayan peak; it may be light as the foam on faery seas or erudite as the disquisitions of him whose

words of learned length and thundering sound  
Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around

it may be fun or the prickliest sort of intellectual stimulation;  
its ideas may be straws which build bridges or rugged ores



# THE ESSAY IN AMERICA

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Amaz'd the gaping rustics rang'd around

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its ideas may be straws which build bridges or rugged ones



talotory quatrains about embattled Americans who fired a shot heard round the world.

I have no wish a century and a quarter after Sydney Smith to make the eagle scream but it is I think an obvious truth that of all the species of *belles lettres* the essay is one domain in which American writing will have been found to stand up in quality and in worthwhile quantity in any output anywhere. To any list of say eight names—Lamb Hazlitt DeQuincey Macaulay Stevenson Pater Boerhaem Chesterton or in the language which fathered the essay Sainte Beuve Taine Maeterlinck Valéry Brunschwig Gourmont Renan Lemaitre—to such lists eight names from the following selections will supply a comparable accomplishment.

It is an anthologist's cross that such factors as space limitations the crotchets of publishers or agents or authors and the complexities or costs of reprinting copyrighted materials do not permit the generous—and sometimes the specific—inclusions that he would like to set forth. Dr. Johnson once remarked (although he had the author rather than the anthologist in mind) "A man will turn over half a library to make one book." The parade of American essayists has been an imposing and is a satisfying array. A lengthy catalogue of names would make tedious reading. It must suffice to say that for every writer whose work is sampled hereafter there is a matching pair or more than has had to be omitted. For Franklin there is a Jefferson and an Irving; for Holmes there is a Lowell and a Curtis; for Aldrich, a Samuel McChord Crothers and a Charles Dudley Warner; for John Burroughs, a John Muir and a Dallas Lore Sharp; for Brown, a Benchley and a Sherman and a Woolcott.

From time to time there are worriers who declare that the essay is outmoded or dying. In lightfully disproving essays are written to prove the point. Miss Repplier in the heyday of Stevensons and Pater—a quarter-century before the first of two world wars made the Victorian way of life and literature an incredibly remote era—wrote *The Passing of the Essay* in reply to two gloomish critics. And so when I am told, among other prophetic items, that the light essay is passing rapidly away and that, in view of its approaching death bed, it cannot be safely recommended as a good opening for enterprise, I am fain before acquiescing gloomily in such a decree to take heart of grace and look a little around me. It is discouraging doubtless for the essayist to be suddenly informed that his

polished to the texture of satin. Its range of subject matter is infinite. One might substitute essay for man in the sentence from Terence's *The Self Tormentor*: "I am a man and nothing that concerns humanity do I deem a matter of indifference to me." In place of a sedate definition perhaps we may compromise on the analogy of the twentieth-century American essayist Stuart Pratt Sherman: "The ordinary life indeed is itself an essay—starting from nowhere in particular and arriving at no definite destination this side of death—but picking its way like a little river, now with bright speed and now with reluctance and fond lingerings over all sorts of obstacles and through all sorts of channels which would be merely humdrum but for the shifting moods and humors that play over a bottom of commonplace with the transient magic of shadow and light."

The form can boast a lengthy and distinguished development during the years that America still belonged to the Indians. Its father Michel Eyquem de Montaigne published his first volume of *Essays* in 1571. In England Sir Francis Bacon's third edition and final complete collection of fifty-eight *Essays* was printed only five years after the landing on Plymouth Rock. Cowley, Addison, Steele, Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, and their peers were accomplished practitioners while the citizens of the colonies were busied in subduing the wilderness. In essay writing the continent and the mother country had a long head start over the colonies and the states.

1820 was the year in which the *Essays of Elia* began to appear. It was in the midst of a rich period in English literature: Keats's *Eve of St. Agnes*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, and Sir Walter's *Ivanhoe* (note by the way Mark Twain's pertinent—or impertinent—comment in the body of this book) appeared during this twelvemonth. In 1820 the Reverend Sydney Smith, Georgian wit (the accompanying essay by Charles S. Brooks will show that this is not entirely a complimentary designation) inquired in an otherwise forgotten publication: "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book or goes to an American play or looks at an American picture or statue?" By this same early date in our national life parenthetically Bryant had written *Thanatopsis*, Irving had published his *Knickerbocker History of New York*, and *The Sketch Book*. Cooper's first novel had appeared, and Emerson may well have been mulling over in his mind the series of soon-to-be-written poems that included the somehow apposite and re-

centuries old or Lamb only three centuries fresher as not suited to their palates will find among their countrymen moderns and contemporaries to satisfy their appetites. But do not demand of the writer that which he cannot be expected to offer. We do not anticipate the sweeping grandeur of the Bishop's Ninth in the brevity of a Chopin Prelude. Elizabeth Drew in *The Enjoyment of Literature* warns of the limitations imposed on the genre and of the frustrations to which the author is exposed. The essayist has so few baits with which to catch and hold the reader's attention. He has no story to arouse his curiosity and no rhyme to charm his ear: his space is so limited that he has but little room for movement, for changes of tone and pace. Per contra A. Edward Newton who (as Christopher Morley later reminds us) has written many delightful essays on the delights of book-collecting remarks that the essayist makes few demands upon his reader. "You may dip into him how and when you will in the five or six impatient minutes before dinner time which would otherwise be wasted or worse—used for grumbling. And Miss Keppeler again assures us that an appreciation of the essay is the natural result of reading it. Like virtue it is its own reward.

As there are those extremists who damn essays as mere lavender and faded lace there are at the other pole those ivory-towered folk who would invest these bits of prose with impossible expectations of combined charms and excellences. Unrelentingly brilliant thought sustained eloquent style penetrating insight a sparkling celebration and an illumination of the depths of emotion—the effect to anticipate all in one capsule. The reality generally lies between. For most twentieth-century readers Mr. Newton's down-to-earth matter-of-factness is the honest and believable approach to essay reading.

Like the rose the essay called by any other name would smell as sweet. Like the rose too it will continue to be a sometimes thorny but lovely floriferous and vigorous growth. For thinking man it is an essential outlet because while man persists on this planet he will reflect upon and ponder over an infinite variety of subjects on political obligations the coming of spring football humor his own sad or joyful or ludicrous experiences his hopes and aspirations the failings of those about him the various sights and sounds and smells and feels of the world the prose and poetry of the major and the minor writers the glories and the malfeasances of the great and the



work is *in articulo mortis*. He feels as a carpenter might feel were he told that chairs and doors are going out of fashion and that he had better turn his attention to mining engineering or a new food for infants. Perhaps he endeavors to explain that a great many chairs were sold in the past week that they are not without utility and that they seem to him as much in favor as ever. Such feeble arguments meet with no response. Furniture he is assured—on the authority of the speaker—is distinctly out of date. The spirit of the time calls for something different and the best business talent—delightful phrase and equally applicable to a windowframe or an epic—is moving in another direction.

Four decades later these macabre misgivings are voiced again. An article in *The Forum* for July 1933 begins "The familiar essay that lavender-scented little old lady of literature, has passed away." In its place on the magazine pages we find crisp articles, blatant exposés, or statistic-laden surveys. The argument concludes: "One day perhaps her pale ghost will not appear at all and the hard young sociologists can have her pages all to themselves. But I hope not. For all their cocksure-ologies they cannot comfort us the way she did—when she was at her best." In *Harper's Magazine* for December 1935 a writer enlarges on the obituary. "The essay has indeed fallen upon desuetude, a desuetude brought on by innocuousness. It died a natural death of pernicious anaemia. It was bloodless long before it was decently laid away in oblivion. Its last gasp of vitality was given out by Matthew Arnold and Ruskin. Here are a sample half-dozen adjectives or phrases with which the writer berates the essays which have appeared since those of Arnold and John Ruskin: heavily quaint, almost obscenely nice, simpering, a false prettification, gentility and archness, and namby pamby stuff. This is obviously bosh and twaddle. What can one find that is obscenely nice in the work of Randolph Bourne? Does Menckens's castigation of the South show a false prettification? Can you imagine Mr. Dooley simpering? Is Heywood Brown's hard hitting a kind of namby pamby stuff? Virginia Woolf heartens us in *The Common Reader*. The essay is alive, there is no reason to despair. As the conditions change so the essayist, most sensitive of all plants to public opinion, adapts himself and if he is good makes the best of the change and if he is bad the worst."

The essay has indeed had a vigorous twentieth-century flowering in America. Those readers who regard Bacon four

# BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706-1790) Boston boy turned Philadelphia printer, scientifically minded player with lightning, inventor, practical philosopher, philanthropist, signer of the Declaration of Independence, plenipotentiary to France and American negotiator in England, wit and bon vivant, was one of the early great Americans to be in addition to all his other accomplishments also a man of letters. His *Autobiography* is a cornerstone of American literature. Using the pseudonym of Richard Saunders, he founded *Poor Richard's Almanack* in the introduction to the first (1733) issue of the annual in language of information, advice, witty aphorisms, and moral precepts. Franklin rubbed his chief competitor, Titan Leeds, publisher of the *American Almanack*. Leeds replied with an abusive and humorless rejoinder. Franklin continued the repartee in the next issue of his *Almanack*. Leeds again replied, and in the 1735 *Almanack* Franklin carried a third installment. Leeds died in 1739. Franklin's fourth and concluding contribution to the episode appeared in the 1740 *Almanack*. The four excerpts are combined here in one essay as an example of the sort of hoax which Franklin loved to perpetrate.

## The Titan Leeds Hoax

COURTEOUS READER,

I might in this place attempt to gain thy Favour by declaring that I write Almanacks with no other View than that of the publick Good; but in this I should not be sincere, and Men are now a days too wise to be deceived by Pretences how specious soever. The plain Truth of the Matter is, I am excessive poor, and my Wife, good Woman, as I tell her, excessive proud; she cannot bear she says to sit spinning in her Shift of Tow, while I do nothing but gaze at the Stars, and has threaten'd more than once to burn all my books and Rattling Traps (as she calls my Instruments) if I do not make some profitable Use of them for the Good of my Family. The Printer has offer'd me some considerable share of the Profits, and I have thus begun to comply with my Dame's Desire.

Indeed this Motive would have had Force enough to have made me publish an Almanack many Years since, had it not been overpowered by my Regard for my good Friend and

#### XIV PREFACE

lesser specimens of humanity and so on and on and on Whether these reflections and ponderings be called essays or—in more stylish current patter—profiles or pieces or criticism or articles or reviews does not much matter What is important is the continuing production and the preservation of these adventures of men's minds Nonessential styles and trimmings may change the mode of the essay may at times become less literary less introspective more practical more factual—but the need for such reflection and its interpretation in a written record will always remain Current nomenclature is far less important than being The following selections from Paine Hight Johnson Martin White and others show how we have through all our national life been continually—and are of late increasingly—involved in war's alarms and repercussions its ominous preliminaries its ghastly actualities and its troubling aftermaths That the essay—the spirit and the manifestation—thrives in even our troubled atomic days witness—to name only half a dozen among their peers—such writings as those of Johnson and Lippmann Edman and Krutch Tourber and White

This book is but the tiniest and most fragmentary sampling of an immense body of rewarding print Among these essayists who follow and among their fellows on the shelves in that half a library which has been turned over—Good hunting!

CHARLES H. SHAW

Swarthmore Pennsylvania.

October 1954

# BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706-1790) Boston boy turned Philadelphia printer, scientifically minded player with lightning, inventor, practical philosopher, philanthropist, signer of the Declaration of Independence, plenipotentiary to France and American negotiator in England. *et* and *bon vivant* was one of the early great Americans to be in addition to all his other accomplishments, also a man of letters. His *Autobiography* is a cornerstone of American literature. Using the pseudonym of Richard Saunders he founded *Poor Richard's Almanack*. In the introduction to the first (1733) issue of this annual mélange of information, advice, witty aphorisms, and moral precepts Franklin ribbed his chief competitor Titan Leeds, publisher of the *American Almanack*. Leeds replied with an abusive and humorless rejoinder. Franklin continued the repartee in the next issue of his *Almanack*. Leeds again replied and in the 1735 *Almanack* Franklin earned a third installment. Leeds died in 1739. Franklin's fourth and concluding contribution to the episode appeared in the 1740 *Almanack*. The four excerpts are combined here in one essay as an example of the sort of hoax which Franklin loved to perpetrate.

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Indeed this Motive would have had Force enough to have made me publish an Almanack many Years since had it not been overpowered by my Regard for my good Friend and

Fellow Student Mr *Titan Leeds* whose Interest I was extremely unwilling to hurt But this Obstacle (I am far from speaking it with Pleasure) is soon to be removed since inexorable Death who was never known to respect Merit has already prepared the mortal Dart the fatal Sister has already extended her destroying Shears and that ingenious Man must soon be taken from us He dies by my Calculation made at his Request on Oct 17 1733 3 h 29 m P M at the very instant of the  $\delta$  of  $\odot$  and  $\gamma$  By his own Calculation he will survive till the 26th of the same Month This small Difference between us we have disputed whenever we have met these 9 Years past but at length he is inclinable to agree with my Judgment Which of us is most exact a little Time will now determine As therefore these Provinces may not longer expect to see any of his Performances after this Year I think myself free to take up the Task and request a share of the publick Encouragement which I am the more apt to hope for on this Account that the Buyer of my Almanack may consider himself not only as purchasing an useful Utensil but as performing an Act of Charity to his poor *Friend and Servant*

R. SAUNDERS

#### COURTEOUS READERS

Your kind and charitable Assistance last Year in purchasing so large an Impression of my Almanacks has made my Circumstances much more easy in the World & requires my grateful Acknowledgment My Wife has been enabled to get a Pot of her own and is no longer obliged to borrow one from a Neighbour nor have we ever since been without something of our own to put in it She has also got a pair of Shoes two new Shifts and a warm new Petticoat and for my part I have bought a second hand Coat so good that I am now not ashamed to go to Town or be seen there These Things have rendered her Temper so much more pacifick than it used to be that I may say I have slept more and more quietly within this last Year than in the three foregoing Years put together Accept my hearty Thanks therefor and my sincere Wishes for your Health and Prosperity

In the Preface to my last Almanack I foretold the Death of my dear old Friend and Fellow-Student the learned and ingenious Mr *Titan Leeds* which was to be on the 17th of *October* 1733 3 h 29 m P M at the very instant of the  $\delta$  of  $\odot$  and  $\gamma$  By his own Calculation he was to survive till the 26th of same Month, and expire in the Time of the Eclipse

near 11 o'clock A M At which of these times he died or whether he be really yet dead I cannot at this present Writing positively assure my Readers forasmuch as a Disorder in my own Family demanded my Presence and would not permit me as I had intended to be with him in his last Moments to receive his last Embrace to close his Eyes and do the Duty of a Friend in performing the last Offices to the Departed Therefore it is that I cannot positively affirm whether he be dead or not for the Stars only show to the Skilful what will happen in the natural & universal Chain of Causes and Effects but tis well known, that the Events which would otherwise certainly happen at certain Times in the Course of Nature are sometimes set aside or postponed for wise and good Reasons by the immediate particular Dispositions of Providence which particular Dispositions the Stars can by no Means discover or foreshew There is however (and I cannot speak it without Sorrow) there is the strongest Probability that my dear Friend is no more for there appears in his Name as I am assured, an Almanack for the Year 1734 in which I am treated in a very gross & unhandsome Manner in which I am called a false Prophet an Ignorant a conceited Scribler a Fool and a Lye Mr Leeds was too well bred to use any Man so indecently & so scurrilously & moreover his Esteem and Affection for me was extraordinary So that it is to be feared that Pamphlet may be only a Contrivance of somebody or other who hopes perhaps to sell two or three Year's Almanacks still by the sole Force and Virtue of Mr Leeds' Name but certainly to put Words into the Mouth of a Gentleman and a Man of Letters against his Friend which the meanest and most scandalous of the People might be ashamed to utter even in a drunken Quarrel is an unpardonable Injury to his Memory and an Imposition upon the Publick

Mr Leeds was not only profoundly skilful in the useful Science he profess'd but he was a Man of exemplary Sobriety a most sincere Friend and an exact Performer of his Word These valuable Qualifications with many others so much endear'd him to me that although it should be so that, contrary to my Prediction & his own he might possibly be yet alive yet my Loss of Honour as a Prognosticator cannot afford me so much Mortification as his Life Health & Safety would give me Joy and Satisfaction

I am Courteous and As I Read

Your poor Friend and Servant

II SAUNDERS

Octob 30 1733

COURTEOUS READER

This is the third Time of my appearing in Print hitherto very much to my own Satisfaction and I have Reason to hope to the Satisfaction of the Publick also for the Publick is generous and has been very charitable and good to me I should be ungrateful then if I did not take every Opportunity of expressing my Gratitude for *ingratum si dixeris omnia dixeris* I therefore return the Publick my most humble and hearty Thanks

Whatever may be the Musick of the Spheres how great soever the Harmony of the Stars tis certain there is no Harmony among the Stargazers but they are perpetually growling and snarling at one another like strange Curs or like some Men at their Wives I had resolv'd to keep the Peace on my own part & affront none of them and I shall persist in that Resolution But having receiv'd much Abuse from *Titan Leeds* deceas'd (*Titan Leeds* when living would not have us'd me so) I say having receiv'd much Abuse from the Ghost of *Titan Leeds* who pretends to be still living and to write Almanacks in Spight of me and my Predictions I cannot help saying that tho I take it patiently I take it very unkindly And what ever he may pretend tis undoubtedly true that he is really defunct and dead First because the Stars are seldom disappoint'd never but in the Case of wise Men *sapiens dominabitur astris* and they foreshow'd his Death at the Time I predicted it Secondly 'Twas requisite and necessary he should die punctually at that Time for the Honour of Astrology the Art profess'd both by him and his Father before him Thirdly 'Tis plain to every one that reads his two last Almanacks (for 1734 and 35) that they are not written with that *Life* his Performances use to be writen with the Wit is low and flat the little Hints dull and spiritless nothing smart in them but *Hudibras* Verses against Astrology at the Heads of the Months in the last which no Astrologer but a *dead one* would have inserted and no Man living would or could write such Stuff as the rest But lastly I convince him in his own Words that he is dead (*ex ore suo condemnatus est*) for in his Preface to his Almanack for 1734 he says *Saunders adds another GROSS FALSHOOD in his Almanack viz that by my own Calculation I shall survive until the 26th of the said Month October 1733 which is as untrue as the former* Now if it be as Leeds

says *untrue* and a *gross Falshood* that he surviv'd till the 26th of October then it is certainly *true* that he died *before* that Time And if he died before that Time he is d ad now to all Intents and Purposes any thing he may say to the Contrary notwithstanding And at what Time before the 26th is it so likely he should die as in the Time by me predicted, viz the 17th of October aforesaid? But if some People will walk and be troublesome after Death it may perhaps be born with a little because it cannot well be avoided unless one would be at the Pains and Expence of laying them in the Red Sea how ever they should not presume too much upon the Liberty allow'd them I know Confinement must needs be mighty irksome to the free Spirit of an Astronomer and I am too compassionate to proceed suddenly to Extremities with it never theless tho I resolve with Reluctance I shall not long defer if it does not speedily learn to treat its living Friends with better Manners

I am *Courteous Reader* your *obliged Friend and Servant*  
R. SAUNDERS

Octob 30 1734

COURTEOUS READER,

You may remember that in my first Almanack publish'd for the Year 1733 I predicted the Death of my dear Friend *Titan Leeds Philomat* to happen that Year on the 17th Day of October 3 h. 29 m P M The good Man it seems died accordingly but W B and A B have continu'd to publish Almanacks in his Name ever since asserting for some Years that he was still living At length when the Truth could no longer be conceal'd from the World they confess his Death in their Almanack for 1739 but pretend that he died not till last Year and that before his Departure he had furnish'd them with Calculations for seven Years to come Ah my Friends these are poor Shifts and thin Disguises of which indeed I should have taken little or no Notice if you had not in the same Time accus'd me as a false Predictor an aspersion that the more affects me as my whole Livelyhood depends on a contrary Character

But to put this Matter beyond Dispute I shall acquaint the World with a Fact, as strange & surprising as it is true being as follows viz

On the 4th Instant towards Midnight, I sat in my little



Study writing this Preface I fell fast asleep & continued in that Condition for some time without dreaming any thing to my Knowledge On awaking I found lying before me the following Letter viz

DEAR FRIEND SAUNDERS

My Respect for you continues even in this separate State and I am griev'd to see the Aspersions thrown on you by the Malevolence of avaricious Publishers of Almanacks who envy your Success They say Your Prediction of my Death in 1733 was false, and they pretend that I remain'd alive many Years after But I do hereby certify that I did actually die at that Time precisely at the Hour you mention'd with a Variation only of 5 m 53 sec. which must be allow'd to be no great Matter in such Cases And I do farther declare that I furnish'd them with no Calculations of the Planets Motions etc seven Years after my Death as they are pleas'd to give out so that the Stuff they publish as an Almanack in my Name is no more mine than tis yours

You will wonder perhaps how this Paper comes written on your Table You must know that no separate Spirits are under any Confinement till after the final Settlement of all Accounts In the mean time we wander where we please visit our old Friends observe their Actions enter sometimes into their Imaginations and give them Hints waking or sleeping that may be of advantage to them Finding you asleep I enter'd your left Nostri ascended into your Brain found out where the Ends of those Nerves were fasten'd that move your right Hand and Fingers by the Help of which I am now writing unknown to you but when you open your Eyes you will see that the Hand written is mine tho wrote with yours

The People of this Infidel Age perhaps will hardly believe this Story But you may give them these three Signs by which they shall be convinc'd of the Truth of it About the middle of June next J J—n *Philomat* shall be openly reconcil'd to the Church of Rome and give all his Goods and Chatties to the Chappel being perverted by a certain Country Schoolmaster On the 7th of September following my old Friend W B—t shall be sober 9 Hours to the Astonishment of all his Neighbours and about the same time W B and A III will publish another

Almanack in my Name in Spight of Truth and Common Sense

As I can see much clearer into Futurity since I got free from the dark Prison of Flesh in which I was continually molested and almost blinded with Fogs arising from Tiff and the Smoke of burnt Drams I shall in kindness to you, frequently give you Information of Things to come for the Improvement of your Almanack.

Being dear Dick, your affectionate Friend

T LEEDS

For my own Part I am convinc'd that the above Letter is genuine ■ the Reader doubts of it, let him carefully observe the three Signs and if they do not actually come ■ pass believe as he pleases

*I am his humble Friend*

R SAUNDERS

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the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly. Its dearth only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britain with an army to enforce her tyranny has declared that she has a right (not only to TAX) but to BIND us in ALL CASES WHATSOEVER and if being bound in that manner is not slavery then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth. Even the expression is impious for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

Whether the independence of the continent was declared too soon or delayed too long I will not now enter into as an argument my own simple opinion is, that had it been eight months earlier it would have been much better. We did not make a proper use of last winter neither could we while we were in a dependent state. However the fault if it were one was all our own we have none to blame but ourselves. But no great deal is lost yet all that Howe has been doing for this month past is rather a ravage than a conquest, which the spirit of the Jerseys a year ago would have quickly repulsed and which time and a little resolution will soon recover.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction or leave them unsupportedly to perish who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world and given us up to the care of devils and as I do not I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to Heaven for help against us a common murderer a highwayman or a house breaker has as good a pretence as he.

'Tis surprising to see how rapidly a panic will sometimes run through a country. All nations and ages have been subject to them. Britain has trembled like an ague at the report of a French fleet of flat bottomed boats and in the fourteenth century the whole English army after ravaging the kingdom of France was driven back like men petrified with fear and this brave exploit was performed by a few broken forces collected and headed by a woman. Joan of Arc. Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen and save her fair fellow sufferers from ravage and ravishment!



mill on a small creek between the bridge and the ferry and made their way through some marshy grounds up to the town of Hackensack, and there passed the river. We brought off as much baggage as the wagons could contain the rest was lost. The simple object was to bring off the garrison and to march them on till they could be strengthened by the Jersey or Pennsylvania militia so as to be enabled to make a stand. We stayed four days at Newark collected in our out posts with some Jersey militia, and marched out twice to meet the enemy on being informed that they were advancing though our numbers were greatly inferior to theirs. Howe in my little opinion committed a great error in generalship in not throwing a body of forces off from Staten Island through Amboy by which means he might have seized all our stores at Brunswick and intercepted our march into Pennsylvania but if we believe the power of hell to be limited we must likewise believe that their agents are under some providential control.

I shall not now attempt to give all the particulars of our retreat to the Delaware suffice it for the present to say that both officers and men though greatly harassed and fatigued frequently without rest, covering or provision the inevitable consequences of a long retreat bore it with a manly and martial spirit. All their wishes centered in one which was that the country would turn out and help them to drive the enemy back. Voltaire has remarked that King William never appeared in full advantage but in difficulties and in action the same remark may be made on General Washington for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds which can not be unlocked by trifles but which when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude and I reckon it among those kind of public blessings which we do not immediately see that God hath blessed him with uninterrupted health and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care.

I shall conclude this paper with some miscellaneous remarks on the state of our affairs and shall begin with asking the following question. Why is it that the enemy have left the New England provinces and made these middle ones the seat of war? The answer is easy. New England is not infested with tories and we are I have been tender in raising the cry against these men and used numberless arguments to show them their danger but it will not do to sacrifice a world to either their folly or their baseness. The period is now arrived in which either they or we must change our situations or one or both must fall. And what is a tory? Good God! what is he? I should





considered militia as the best troops in the world for a sudden exertion but they will not do for a long campaign. Howe it is probable will make an attempt on this city should he fail on this side the Delaware he is ruined if he succeeds our cause is not ruined He stakes all on his side against a part on ours admitting he succeeds the consequence will be that armies from both ends of the continent will march to assist their suffering friends in the middle states for he cannot go every where it is impossible I consider Howe as the greatest enemy the tories have he is bringing a war into their country which, had it not been for him and partly for themselves they had been clear of Should he now be expelled I wish with all the devotion of a Christian that the names of whig and tory may never more be mentioned but should the tories give him encouragement to come or assistance if he come I sincerely wish that our next year's arms may expel them from the continent and the congress appropriate their possessions in the relief of those who have suffered in well-doing A single successful battle next year will settle the whole America could carry on a two years war by the confiscation of the property of disaffected persons and be made happy by their expulsion Say not that this is revenge call it rather the soft resentment of a suffering people who having no object in view but the good of all have staked their own all upon a seemingly doubtful event Yet it is folly to argue against determined hardness eloquence may strike the air and the language of sorrow draw forth the tear of compassion but nothing can reach the heart that is steeled with prejudice

Quitting this class of men I turn with the warm ardor of a friend to those who have nobly stood and are yet determined to stand the matter out I call not upon a few but upon all not on *this* state or *that* state but on every state up and help us lay your shoulders to the wheel better have too much force than too little when so great an object is at stake Let it be told to the future world that in the depth of winter when nothing but hope and virtue could survive that the city and the country alarmed at one common danger came forth to meet and to repulse it Say not that thousands are gone turn out your tens of thousands throw not the burden of the day upon Providence but *show ye it by your works* that God may bless you It matters not where you live or what rank of life you hold the evil or the blessing will reach you all The far and the near the home counties and the back the rich and the poor will suffer or rejoice alike The heart that

not be afraid to go with a hundred whigs against a thousand tories were they to attempt to get into arms Every tory is a coward for servile slavish self interested fear is the foundation of toryism and a man under such influence though he may be cruel never can be brave

But before the line of irrecoverable separation be drawn between us let us reason the matter together your conduct is an invitation to the enemy yet not one in a thousand of you has heart enough to join him Howe is as much deceived by you as the American cause is injured by you He expects you will all take up arms and flock to his standard with muskets on your shoulders Your opinions are of no use to him unless you support him personally for tis soldiers and not tones that he wants

I once felt all that kind of anger which a man ought to feel against the mean principles that are held by the tories a noted one who kept a tavern at Amboy was standing at his door with as pretty a child in his hand about eight or nine years old as I ever saw and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent finished with this unfatherly expression *Well! give me peace in my day* Not a man lives on the continent but fully believes that a separation must some time or other finally take place and a generous parent should have said *If there must be trouble let it be in my day that my child may have peace* and this single reflection well applied is sufficient to awaken every man to duty Not a place upon earth might be so happy as America Her situation is remote from all the wrangling world and she has nothing to do but to trade with them A man can easily distinguish in himself between temper and principle and I am as confident as I am that God gave us the world that America will never be happy till she gets clear of foreign dominion Wars without ceasing will break out till that period arrives and the continent must in the end be conqueror for though the flame of liberty may sometimes cease to shine the coal can never expire

America did not nor does she want force but she wanted a proper application of that force Wisdom is not the purchase of a day and it is no wonder that we should err in the first setting off From an excess of tenderness we were unwilling to raise an army and trusted our cause to the temporary defence of a well meaning militia A summer's experience has now taught us better yet with those troops while they were collected we were able to set bounds to the progress of the enemy and thank God! they are again assembling I always

the Indians who are all armed this perhaps is what some Tories would not be sorry for. Were the home counties to deliver up their arms, they would be exposed to the resentment of the back counties who would then have it in their power to chastise their defection in pleasure. And were any one state to give up its arms that state must be garrisoned by all Howe's army of Britons and Hessians to preserve it from the anger of the rest. Mutual fear is the principal link in the chain of mutual love and woe be to that state that breaks the compact. Howe is mercifully inviting you to barbarous destruction and men must be either rogues or fools that will not see it.

I dwell not upon the powers of imagination. I bring reason to your ears and in language as plain as A, B, C, hold up truth to your eyes.

I thank God that I fear not. I see no real cause for fear. I know our situation well and can see the way out of it. While our army was collected Howe dared not risk a battle and it is no credit to him that he decamped from the White Plains and wanted a mean opportunity to ravage the defenceless Jerseys but it is great credit to us that, with a handful of men, we sustained an orderly retreat for near an hundred miles brought off our ammunition all our field pieces the greatest part of our stores and had four rivers to pass. None can say that our retreat was precipitate for we were near three weeks in performing it that the country might have time to come in. Twice we marched back to meet the enemy and remained out till dark. The sign of fear was not seen in our camp and had not some of the cowardly and disaffected inhabitants spread false alarms through the country the Jerseys had never been ravaged. Once more we are again collected and collecting our new army at both ends of the continent is recruiting fast, and we shall be able to open the next campaign with sixty thousand men well armed and clothed. This is our situation and who will may know it. By perseverance and fortitude we have the prospect of a glorious issue by cowardice and submission, the sad choice of a variety of evils—a ravaged country—a depopulated city—habitations without safety and slavery without hope—our homes turned into barracks and bawdy houses for Hessians and a future race to provide for whose fathers we shall doubt of. Look on this picture and weep over it! and if there yet remains one thoughtless wretch who believes it not, let him suffer it unlamented.

December 23 1776

COMMON SENSE

feels not row is dead the blood of his children will curse his cowardice who shrinks back at a time when a little might have saved the whole and made *them* happy I love the man that can smile in trouble that can gather strength from distress and grow brave by reflection 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink but he whose heart is firm and whose conscience approves his conduct will pursue his principles unto death My own line of reasoning is to myself as straight and clear as a ray of light Not all the treasures of the world so far as I believe could have induced me to support an offensive war for I think it murder but if a thief breaks into my house burns and destroys my property and kills or threatens to kill me or those that are in it and to *bind me in all cases whatsoever* to his absolute will am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me whether he who does it is a king or a common man my countryman or not *my countryman* whether it be done by an individual villain or an army of them? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference neither can any just cause be assigned why we should punish in the one case and pardon in the other Let them call me rebel and welcome I feel no concern from it but I should suffer the misery of devils were I to make a whore of my soul by swearing allegiance to one whose character is that of a sottish stupid stubborn worthless brutish man I conceive likewise a horrid idea in receiving mercy from a being who at the last day shall be shrieking to the rocks and mountains to cover him and fleeing with terror from the orphan the widow and the slain of America

There are cases which cannot be overdone by language and this is one There are persons too who see not the full extent of the evil which threatens them they solace themselves with hopes that the enemy if they succeed will be merciful It is the madness of folly to expect mercy from those who have refused to do justice and even mercy where conquest is the object is only a trick of war the cunning of the fox is as murderous as the violence of the wolf and we ought to guard equally against both Howe's first object is partly by threats and partly by promises to terrify or seduce the people to deliver up their arms and receive mercy The ministry recommended the same plan to Gage and this is what the tories call making their peace *a peace which passeth all understanding indeed!* A peace which would be the immediate forerunner of a worse ruin than any we have yet thought of Ye men of Pennsylvania do reason upon these things! Were the back counties to give up their arms they would fall an easy prey to

The subject speaks its own importance comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world. It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country by their conduct and example to decide the important question whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force. If there be any truth in the remark the crisis at which we are arrived may with propriety be regarded as the era in which that decision is to be made and a wrong election of the part we shall act may in this view deserve to be considered as the general misfortune of mankind.

This idea will add the inducements of philanthropy to those of patriotism, to heighten the solicitude which all considerate and good men must feel for the event. Happy will it be if our choice should be directed by a judicious estimate of our true interests unperplexed and unbiased by considerations not connected with the public good. But this is a thing more ardently to be wished than seriously to be expected. The plan offered to our deliberations affects too many particular interests innovates upon too many local institutions, not to involve in its discussion a variety of objects foreign to its merits and of views passions and prejudices little favourable to the discovery of truth.

Among the most formidable of the obstacles which the new Constitution will have to encounter may readily be distinguished the obvious interest of a certain class of men in every State to resist all changes which may hazard a diminution of the power emolument and consequence of the offices they hold under the State establishments and the perverted ambition of another class of men who will either hope to aggrandise themselves by the confusions of their country or will flatter themselves with fairer prospects of elevation from the subdivision of the empire into several partial confederacies than from its union under one government.

It is not, however my design to dwell upon observations of this nature. I am well aware that it would be disingenuous to resolve indiscriminately the opposition of any set of men (merely because their animosities might subject them to suspicion) into interested or ambitious views. Candour will oblige us to admit that even such men may be actuated by upright

# ALEXANDER HAMILTON

AFTER THE REVOLUTION had been won a decade of theories discussions decisions and actions culminated in the Constitutional Convention held at Philadelphia in 1787 *The Federalist* ■ a series of eighty five essays first published in the New York press during 1787 88 written for the purpose of persuading the people of the state of New York ■ ratify the new federal Constitution The papers (signed Publius) were produced by three men John Jay James Madison and Alexander Hamilton the latter being planner of the series and author of most of the articles Alexander Hamilton (1757 1804) was born in the British West Indies the illegitimate son of James Hamilton and Rachel Fawcett Levine When the boy was eleven his mother died and his father disappeared The lad became a clerk in a general store Later his aunts arranged for him to go to New York At sixteen he entered King's College but the Revolution intervened to prevent his graduation In 1777 he became secretary and aide de-camp to Washington After the war he studied law and was admitted to the bar He was a member of the first Continental Congress of the New York legislature and of the Constitutional Convention When Washington became President, Hamilton was chosen as Secretary of the Treasury Political activities and personal animosities brought him into conflict with many leaders and public disgrace smeared him in 1797 when he was baselessly accused of dishonesty He emerged with his influence and standing unimpaired Although by this time he had retired from public life to law practice and the founding of the *New York Evening Post* his continuing political activities were such that he was forced to accept a challenge from his long time opponent Aaron Burr Burr's first bullet struck Hamilton's liver the next day he died The following selection is the introductory essay of *The Federalist* series

## The Union and Its New Constitution

*To the People of the State of New York*

After an unequivocal experience of the inefficiency of the subsisting federal government you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America.

The subject speaks its own importance comprehending in its consequences nothing less than the existence of the UNION the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed the fate of an empire in many respects the most interesting in the world It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country by their conduct and example to decide the important question whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force If there be any truth in the remark the crisis at which we are arrived may with propriety be regarded as the era in which that decision is to be made and a wrong election of the part we shall act may in this view deserve to be considered as the general misfortune of mankind.

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Among the most formidable of the obstacles which the new Constitution will have to encounter may readily be distinguished the obvious interest of a certain class of men in every State to resist all changes which may hazard a diminution of the power emolument, and consequence of the offices they hold under the State establishments and the perverted ambition of another class of men who will either hope to aggrandise themselves by the confusions of their country or will flatter themselves with fairer prospects of elevation from the subdivision of the empire into several partial confederacies than from its union under one government.

It is not however my design to dwell upon observations of this nature I am well aware that it would be disingenuous to resolve indiscriminately the opposition of any set of men (merely because their situations might subject them to suspicion) into interested or ambitious views Candour will oblige us to admit that even such men may be actuated by upright



intentions and it cannot be doubted that much of the opposition which has made its appearance or may hereafter make its appearance will spring from sources blameless at least if not respectable—the honest errors of minds led astray by preconceived jealousies and fears. So numerous indeed and so powerful are the causes which serve to give a false bias to the judgment that we upon many occasions see wise and good men on the wrong, as well as on the right side of questions of the first magnitude to society. This circumstance if duly attended to would furnish a lesson of moderation to those who are ever so much persuaded of their being in the right in any controversy. And a further reason for caution in this respect might be drawn from the reflection that we are not always sure that those who advocate the truth are influenced by purer principles than their antagonists. Ambition, avarice, personal animosity, party opposition, and many other motives not more laudable than these are apt to operate as well upon those who support as those who oppose the right side of a question. Were there not even these inducements to moderation, nothing could be more ill judged than that intolerant spirit which has at all times characterised political parties. For in politics, as in religion, it is equally absurd to aim at making proselytes by fire and sword. Heresies in either can rarely be cured by persecution.

And yet however just these sentiments will be allowed to be, we have already sufficient indications that it will happen in this as in all former cases of great national discussion. A torrent of angry and malignant passions will be let loose. To judge from the conduct of the opposite parties we shall be led to conclude that they will mutually hope to evince the justness of their opinions and to increase the number of their converts by the loudness of their declamations and the bitterness of their invectives. An enlightened zeal for the energy and efficiency of government will be stigmatised as the offspring of a temper fond of despotic power and hostile to the principles of liberty. An over-scrupulous jealousy of danger to the rights of the people which is more commonly the fault of the head than of the heart will be represented as mere pretence and artifice, the stale bait for popularity at the expense of the public good. It will be forgotten on the one hand that jealousy is the usual concomitant of love and that the noble enthusiasm of liberty is apt to be infected with a spirit of narrow and illiberal distrust. On the other hand it will be equally forgotten

that the vigour of government is essential to the security of liberty that, in the contemplation of a sound and well informed judgment, their interest can never be separated and that a dangerous ambition more often lurks behind the specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people than under the forbidding appearance of zeal for the firmness and efficiency of government. History will teach us that the former has been found a much more certain road to the introduction of despotism than the latter and that of those men who have overturned the liberties of republics the greatest number have begun their career by paying an obsequious court to the people commencing demagogues and ending tyrants.

In the course of the preceding observations I have had an eye my fellow-citizens to putting you upon your guard against all attempts from whatever quarter to influence your decision in a matter of the utmost moment to your welfare by any impressions other than those which may result from the evidence of truth. You will no doubt at the same time have collected from the general scope of them that they proceed from a source not unfriendly to the new Constitution. Yes my countrymen I own to you that, after having given it an attentive consideration, I am clearly of opinion it is your interest to adopt it. I am convinced that this is the safest course for your liberty your dignity and your happiness. I affect no reserves which I do not feel. I will not amuse you with an appearance of deliberation when I have decided. I frankly acknowledge to you my convictions and I will freely lay before you the reasons on which they are founded. The consciousness of good intentions disdains ambiguity. I shall not however multiply professions on this head. My motives must remain in the depositary of my own breast. My arguments will be open to all and may be judged of by all. They shall at least be offered in a spirit which will not disgrace the cause of truth.

I propose in a series of papers to discuss the following interesting particulars—The utility of the UNION to your political prosperity—The insufficiency of the present Confederation to preserve that Union—The necessity of a government at least equally energetic with the one proposed to the attainment of this object—The conformity of the proposed Constitution to the true principles of republican government—Its analogy to your own State constitution—and lastly The addition necessary which its adoption will afford to the preservation of that species of government to liberty and to property.



## RALPH WALDO EMERSON

RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803-1882) monumental figure in American literature was born in Boston. After graduation as class poet, from Harvard at the age of eighteen he taught school for more than three unhappy years before studying for the ministry. He preached at a Unitarian church in Boston for a few years but withdrew from his church affiliations because of disagreements on doctrinal questions. From 1834 Emerson's life was spent in Concord where he became the center of the country's most potent mid-century group of intellectuals—Benson, Alcott, Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, Jones, Very, Channing, Hawthorne. For two years he edited *The Dial*, the short-lived quarterly magazine for literature, philosophy and religion. As a stimulating and provocative public lecturer participating with eloquent optimism in discussions of national issues he established a reputation that became international. As poet (*Concord Hymn*, *Good-bye to the Albatross*) or as prime mover of Concord's Transcendental Club—whose members viewed the world of phenomena as a sort of symbol of the inner life and emphasized individual freedom and self-reliance—Emerson's high place is secure. His crowning achievement, however, is his series of volumes of *Sermons*. His first book, *Nature*, was published in 1836. *Essay First Series* appeared in 1841. Emerson thrice visited England first in 1833 when he established a lifelong friendship with Carlyle. Shortly after his return from his second visit to England he delivered, in Boston in 1848, the series of lectures published seven years later as *English Traits*. The accompanying selection is from this book.

### Literature

A strong common sense which it is not easy to unsettle or disturb marks the English mind for a thousand years. A rude strength newly applied to thought as of sailors and soldiers who had lately learned to read. They have no fancy and never are surprised into a covert or witty word such as pleased the Athenians and Italians and was convertible into a fable not long after but they delight in strong earthly expression not mistakable coarsely true to the human body and though spoken among princes equally fit and welcome to the mob.



of intellect, makes the very genius of Shakespeare and Milton When it reaches the pure element it treads the clouds as securely as the adamant. Even in its elevations materialistic poetry is common sense inspired or iron raised to white heat.

The marriage of the two qualities is in their speech. It is a tacit rule of the language to make the frame or skeleton of Saxon words and when elevation or ornament is sought, to interweave Roman but sparingly nor is a sentence made of Roman words alone without loss of strength. The children and laborers use the Saxon unmixed. The Latin unmixed is abandoned to the colleges and Parliament. Mixture is a secret of the English island and in their dialect, the male principle is the Saxon the female the Latin and they are combined in every discourse. A good writer if he has indulged in a Roman roundness makes haste to chasten and nerve his period by English monosyllables.

When the Gothic nations came into Europe they found it lighted with the sun and moon of Hebrew and of Greek genius. The tablets of their brain long kept in the dark were finely sensible to the double glory. To the images from this twin source (of Christianity and art) the mind became fruitful as by the incubation of the Holy Ghost. The English mind flowered in every faculty. The common-sense was surprised and inspired. For two centuries England was philosophic religious poetic. The mental furniture seemed of larger scale the memory capacious like the storehouse of the rains the ardor and endurance of study the boldness and facility of their mental construction their fancy and imagination and easy spanning of vast distances of thought the enterprise or accounting of new subjects and generally the easy exertion of power astonish, like the legendary feats of Guy of Warwick. The union of Saxon precision and oriental soaring of which Shakespeare is the perfect example is shared in less degree by the writers of two centuries. I find not only the great masters out of all rivalry and reach but the whole writing of the time charged with a masculine force and freedom.

There is a hygienic suppleness rough vigor and closeness to the matter in hand even in the second and third class of writers and, I think in the common style of the people as one finds it in the citation of wills letters and public documents in proverbs and forms of speech. The more hearty and sturdy expression may indicate that the savageness of the Norseman was not all gone. Their dynamic brains hurled



Where that goes is poetry health and progress The rules of its genesis or its diffusion are not known That knowledge if we had it, would supersede all we call science of the mind It seems an affair of race or of meta-chemistry the vital point being—how far the sense of unity or instinct of seeking resemblances predominated. For wherever the mind takes a step it is to put itself at one with a larger class discerned beyond the lesser class with which it has been conversant. Hence all poetry and all affirmative action comes

Bacon in the structure of his mind held of the analogists or (as we popularly say naming from the best example) Platonists Whoever discredits analogy and requires heaps of facts before any theories can be attempted has no poetic power and nothing original or beautiful will be produced by him Locke is as surely the influx of decomposition and of prose as Bacon and the Platonists of growth The Platonic is the poetic tendency the so-called scientific is the negative and poisonous 'Tis quite certain that Spenser Burns Byron and Wordsworth will be Platonists and that the dull men will be Lockeists Then politics and commerce will absorb from the educated class men of talents without genius precisely because such have no resistance

Bacon capable of ideas yet devoted to ends required in his map of the mind first of all universality or *prima philosophia* the receptacle for all such profitable observations and axioms as fall not within the compass of any of the special parts of philosophy but are more common and of a higher stage He held this element essential it is never out of mind he never spares rebukes for such as neglect it believing that no perfect discovery can be made in a flat level but you must ascend to a higher science If any man thinketh philosophy and universality to be idle studies he doth not consider that all professions are from thence served and supplied and thus I take to be a great cause that has hindered the progression of learning because these fundamental knowledges have been studied but in passage He explained himself by giving various quaint examples of the summary or common laws of which each science has its own illustration He complains that he finds this part of learning very deficient the profounder sort of wits drawing a bucket now and then for their own use but the spring head unvisited This was the *dry light* which did scorch and offend most men's watery natures Plato had signified the same sense when he said All the great arts require a subtle and speculative research into the





Such richness of genius had not existed more than once before. These heights could not be maintained. As we find stumps of vast trees in our exhausted soils and have received traditions of their ancient fertility to tillage so history reckons epochs in which the intellect of famed races became effete. So it fared with English genius. These heights were followed by a meanness, and a descent of the mind into lower levels the loss of wings no high speculation. Locke to whom the meaning of ideas was unknown became the type of philosophy and his "understanding" the measure in all nations of the English intellect. His countrymen forsook the lofty sides of Parnassus on which they had once walked with echoing steps and disused the studies once so beloved the powers of thought fell into neglect. The later English want the faculty of Plato and Aristotle of grouping men in natural classes by an insight of general laws so deep that the rule is deduced with equal precision from few subjects or from one as from multitudes of lives. Shakespeare is supreme in that, as in all the great mental energies. The Germans generalize the English cannot interpret the German mind. German science comprehends the English. The absence of the faculty in England is shown by the untidiness which accumulates mountains of facts as a bad general wants myriads of men and miles of redoubts to compensate the inspirations of courage and conduct.

The English shrink from a generalization. "They do not look abroad into universality or they draw only a bucket full at the fountain of the First Philosophy for their occasion and do not go in the springhead. Bacon who said this is almost unique among his countrymen in that faculty at least among the prose-writers. Milton who was the stair or high table land to let down the English genius from the summits of Shakespeare used this privilege sometimes in poetry more rarely in prose. For a long interval afterwards it is not found. Burke was addicted to generalizing but his was a shorter hoc as his thoughts have less depth, they have less compass. Hume's abstractions are not deep or wise. He owes his fame to one keen observation that no copula had been detected between any cause and effect, either in physics or in thought that the term cause and effect was loosely or gratuitously applied to what we know only as consecutive not in all as casual. Doctor Johnson's written abstractions have little value the tone of feeling in them makes their chief worth.

Mr. Hallam, a learned and elegant scholar has written the



avoid ideas and avoid morals. He thinks it the distinctive merit of the Baconian philosophy in its triumph over the old Platonism its disentangling the intellect from theories of the All-Fair and all-Good, and pinning it down to the making a better sick-chair and a better wine whey for an invalid—this not ironically but in good faith—that, solid advantage” as he calls it, meaning always sensual benefit is the only good. The eminent benefit of astronomy is the better navigation it creates to enable the fruit-ships to bring home their lemons and wine to the London grocer. It was a curious result in which the civility and religion of England for a thousand years ends in denying morals and reducing the intellect to a sauce-pan. The critic hides his scepticism under the English cant of practical. To convince the reason to touch the conscience is romantic pretension. The fine arts fall to the ground. Beauty except as luxurious commodity does not exist. It is very certain, I may say in passing that if Lord Bacon had been only the sensualist his critic pretends he would never have acquired the fame which now entitles him to this patronage. It is because he had imagination the leisure of the spirit, and basked in an element of contemplation out of all modern English atmospheric gauges that he is impressive to the imaginations of men and has become a potentate not to be ignored. Sir David Brewster sees the high place of Bacon, without finding Newton indebted to him and thinks it a mistake Bacon occupies it by specific gravity or levity not by any feat he did or by any tutoring more or less of Newton, &c. but an effect of the same cause which showed itself more pronounced afterwards in Hooke Boyle and Halley.

Coleridge a catholic mind, with a hunger for ideas with eyes looking before and after the highest bards and sages and who wrote and spoke the only high criticism in his time—is one of those who save England from the reproach of no longer possessing the capacity to appreciate what rarest wit the island has yielded. Yet the misfortune of his life his vast attempts but most inadequate performances failing to accomplish any one masterpiece seems to mark the closing of an era. Even in him the traditional Englishman was too strong for the philosopher and he fell into accommodations and as Burke had striven to idealize the English State so Coleridge narrowed his mind in the attempt to reconcile the gothic rule and dogma of the Anglican Church with eternal ideas. But for Coleridge and a lurking taciturn minority uttering



were driven by tastes and modes they found in vogue into their several careers. So at this moment every ambitious young man studies geology so members of Parliament are made and churchmen.

The bias of Englishmen to practical skill has reacted on the national mind. They are incapable of an intuition and respect the five mechanic powers even in their song. The voice of their modern muse has a slight hint of the steam whistle and the poem is created as an ornament and finish of their monarchy and by no means as the bird of a new morning which forgets the past world in the full enjoyment of that which is forming. They are with difficulty ideal: they are the most conditioned men as if having the best conditions they could not bring themselves to forfeit them. Every one of them is a thousand years old and lives by his memory and when you say that they accept it as praise.

Nothing comes to the book-shops but politics, travels, statistics, labulation and engineering and even what is called philosophy and letters is mechanical in its structure as if inspiration had ceased as if no vast hope, no religion, no song of joy, no wisdom, no analogy existed any more. The tone of colleges and of scholars and of literary society has this mortal air. I seem to walk on a marble floor where nothing will grow. They exert every variety of talent on a lower ground, and may be said to live and act in a sub-mind. They have lost all commanding views in literature, philosophy and science. A good Englishman shuts himself out of three-fourths of his mind and confines himself to one-fourth. He has learning, good sense, power of labor and logic, but a faith in the laws of the mind like that of Archimedes, a belief like that of Euler and Kepler that experience must follow and not lead the laws of the mind, a devotion to the theory of politics like that of Hooker and Milton, and Harrington: the modern English mind repudiates.

I fear the same fault lies in their science, since they have known how to make it repulsive and bereave nature of its charm—though perhaps the complaint flies wider and the vice attaches to many more than to British physicists. The eye of the naturalist must have a scope like nature itself, a susceptibility to all impressions, alive to the heart as well as to the logic of creation. But English science puts humanity to the door. It wants the connection which is the test of genius—science is false by not being poetic. It isolates the repulsive



knowledge and the surrender to nature there ■ the supports of the imagination the priapism of the senses and the understanding we have the factitious instead of the natural tasteless expense arts of comfort, and the rewarding as an illustrious inventor whosoever will contrive one impediment more to interpose between the man and his objects

Thus poetry is degraded and made ornamental Pope and his school wrote poetry fit to put around frosted cake What did Walter Scott write without stunt? a rhymed traveler's guide ■ Scotland And the libraries of verses they print have this Birmingham character How many volumes of well bred metre we must wangle through before we can be filled taught, renewed! We want the marvellous the beauty which we can manufacture at no mill—can give no account of the beauty of which Chaucer and Chapman had the secret The poetry of course is low and prosaic only now and then, as in Wordsworth, conspicuous or in Byron passionate or in Tennyson factitious But if I should count the poets who have contributed to the Bible of existing England sentences of guidance and consolation which are still glowing and effective—how few! Shall I find my heavenly bread in the reigning poets? Where is great design in modern English poetry? The English have lost sight of the fact that poetry exists to speak the spiritual law and that no wealth ■ description or of fancy is yet essentially new and out of the limits of prose until this condition is reached Therefore the grave old poets like the Greek artists beaded their designs and less considered the finish It was their office to lead to the divine sources out of which all this and much more readily springs and if this religion is in the poetry it raises us to some purpose and we can well afford some staidness, or hardness or want of popular tune in the verses

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Meantime I know that a retrieving power lies in the English race which seems to make any record possible in other words, there is at all times a minority of profound minds existing in the nation, capable of appreciating every soaring of intellect and every hint of tendency. While the constructive talent seems dwarfed and superficial the criticism is often in the noblest tone and suggests the presence of the invisible gods I can well believe what I have often heard that there are two nations in England but it is not the Poor and the Rich nor is it the Normans and Saxons or the Celt and the Goth. These are each always becoming the other for Robert Owen does not exaggerate the power of circumstance. But the two complexions or two styles of mind—the perceptive class and the practical finality class—are ever in counter-poise interacting mutually one in hopeless minorities the other in huge masses one studious contemplative expending the other the ungrateful pupil scornful of the source whilst availing itself of the knowledge for gain these two nations, of genius and of animal force though the first consist of only a dozen souls and the second of twenty millions forever by their discord and their accord yield the power of the English State



and talked about in public as "Teacups." No so far as we give to the community some records of the talks at our table our thoughts become public property but the sacred personality of every Teacup must be properly respected. If any wonder at the presence of one of our number whose eccentricities might seem to render him an undesirable associate of the company he should remember that some people may have relatives whom they feel bound to keep their eye on besides the cracked Teacup brings out the ring of the sound ones as nothing else does. Remember also that the soundest teacup does not always hold the best tea nor the cracked teacup the worst.

This is a hint to the reader who is not expected to be too curious about the individual Teacups constituting our unorganized association.

### *The Dictator Discourses*

I have been reading Balzac's *Peau de Chagrin*. You have all read the story I hope for it is the first of his wonderful romances which fixed the eyes of the reading world upon him and it is a most fascinating if somewhat fantastic tale. A young man becomes the possessor of a certain magic skin, the peculiarity of which is that, while it gratifies every wish formed by its possessor it shrinks in all its dimensions each time that a wish is gratified. The young man makes every effort to ascertain the cause of its shrinking invokes the aid of the physicist, the chemist, the student of natural history but all in vain. He draws a red line around it. That same day he indulges a longing for a certain object. The next morning there is a little interval between the red line and the skin close to which it was traced. So always so inevitably. As he lives on satisfying one desire one passion after another the process of shrinking continues. A mortal disease sets in which keeps pace with the shrinking skin and his life and his talisman come to an end together.

One would say that such a piece of integument was hardly a desirable possession. And yet, how many of us have at this very moment a *peau de chagrin* of our own diminishing with every costly wish indulged and incapable like the magical one of the story of being arrested in its progress!

Need I say that I refer to those coupon bonds issued in the days of eight and ten per cent interest, and gradually parrow



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Need I say that I refer to those coupon bonds issued in the days of eight and ten per cent interest and gradually narrow





"I were a man I had rather have done something worth telling of than make verses about what other people had done."

You agree with Alexander the Great said the Professor. You would prefer the fame of Achilles to that of Homer who told the story of his wrath and its direful consequences. I am afraid that I should hardly agree with you. Achilles was little better than a Choctaw brave. I won't quote Horace's line which characterizes him so admirably for I will take it for granted that you all know it. He was a gentleman—so is a first-class Indian—a very noble gentleman in point of courage, lofty bearing, courtesy but an uncooped, ill-clad, turbulent, high-tempered young fellow looked up to by his crowd very much as the champion of the heavy weights is looked up to by his gang of blackguards. Alexander himself was not much better—a foolish, fiery young madcap. How often is he mentioned except as a war-wag? His best record is that he served to point a moral as Macedonia's madman. He made a figure it is true in Dryden's great Ode but what kind of a figure? He got drunk,—in very bad company too—and then turned fire-bug. He had one redeeming point—he did value his Homer and slept with the Iliad under his pillow. A poet like Homer seems to me worth a dozen such fellows as Achilles and Alexander.

"Homer is all very well for those that can read him," said Number Seven, "but the fellows that tag verses together nowadays are mostly fools. That's my opinion. I wrote some verses once myself but I had been sick and was very weak. Hadn't strength enough to write in prose. I suppose."

This aggressive remark caused a little stir at our teatable. For you must know if I have not told you already there are suspicions that we have more than one poet at our table. I have already confessed that I do myself indulge in verse now and then and have given my readers a specimen of my work in that line. But there is so much difference of character in the verses which are produced at our table without any signature that I feel quite sure there are at least two or three other contributors besides myself. There is a tall, old-fashioned silver urn, a sugar bowl of the period of the Empire in which the poems sent to be read are placed by unseen hands. When the proper moment arrives I lift the cover of the urn and take out any manuscript it may contain. If conversation is going on and the company are in a talking mood I replace the manuscript or manuscripts, clap on the cover and wait until there is a moment's quiet before taking it off again. I might



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straight into the waste basket. To write poetry" was an art and mystery in which only a few noted men and a woman or two were experts.

When Potter the ventriloquist" the predecessor of the well remembered Signor Blitz, went round giving his entertainments there was something unexplained uncanny almost awful and beyond dispute marvellous in his performances. Those watches that disappeared and came back to their owners those endless supplies of treasures from empty hats and especially those crawling eggs that travelled all over the magician's person sent many a child home thinking that Mr Potter must have ghostly assistants and raised grave doubts in the minds of "professors" that is members of the church whether they had not compromised their characters by being seen in such an unhallowed exhibition. Nowadays a clever boy who has made a study of parlor magic can do many of those tricks almost as well as the great sorcerer himself. How simple it all seems when we have seen the mechanism of the deception!

It is just so with writing in verse. It was not understood that everybody can learn to make poetry just as they can learn the more difficult tricks of juggling. Mr Bourdain's discovery that he had been speaking and writing prose all his life is nothing to that of the man who finds out in middle life or even later that he might have been writing poetry all his days if he had only known how perfectly easy and simple it is. Not everybody it is true has a sufficiently good ear a sufficient knowledge of rhymes and capacity for handling them to be what is called a poet. I doubt whether more than nine out of ten in the average have that combination of gifts required for the writing of readable verse.

This last expression of opinion created a sensation among The Teacups. They looked puzzled for a minute. One whispered to the next Teacup. "More than nine out of ten! I should think that was a pretty liberal allowance."

Yes I continued perhaps ninety nine in a hundred would come nearer to the mark. I have sometimes thought I might consider it worth while to set up a school for instruction in the art. *Poetry taught in twelve lessons.* Congenital idiocy is no disqualification. Anybody can write poetry. It is a most unenviable distinction to have published a thin volume of verse which nobody wanted nobody buys nobody reads nobody cares for except the author who cries over its pathos.



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words. You cannot make any use of cars. I will suppose you have no occasion to talk about *scars*. "the red planet *Mars*" has been used already. Diddin has said enough about the gal *bat tars*. What is there left for you but *bars*? So you give up your trains of thought. capitulate to necessity and manage to lug in some kind of allusion in place or out of place which will allow you to make use of *bars*. Can there be imagined a more certain process for breaking up all continuity of thought for taking out all the vigor all the virility which belongs to natural prose as the vehicle of strong graceful spontaneous thought, than this miserable subjugation of intellect to the clink of well or ill matched syllables? I think you will smile if I tell you of an idea I have had about teaching the art of writing poems to the half witted children at the Idiot Asylum. The trick of rhyming cannot be more usefully employed than in furnishing a pleasant amusement to the poor feeble minded children. I should feel that I was well employed in getting up a Primer for the pupils of the Asylum and other young persons who are incapable of serious thought and connected expression. I would start in the simplest way thus —

When darkness veils the evening  
I love to lose my weary

The pupil begins by supplying the missing words which most children who are able to keep out of fire and water can accomplish after a certain number of trials. When the poet that is to be has got so as to perform this task easily a skeleton verse in which two or three words of each line are omitted is given the child to fill up. By and by the more difficult forms of metre are outlined until at length a feeble minded child can make out a sonnet completely equipped with its four pairs of rhymes in the first section and its three pairs in the second part.

Number Seven interrupted my discourse somewhat abruptly as is his wont for we grant him a license in virtue of his eccentricity which we should hardly expect to be claimed by a perfectly sound Teacup.

"That's the way — that's the way!" exclaimed he. "It's just the same thing as my plan for teaching drawing. Some curiosity was shown among The Teacups to know what the queer creature had got into his head and Number Five asked him in her irresistible tones if he wouldn't oblige us by telling us all about it."



pupil will learn to get the outline of a human figure in ten lessons, the model coming five hundred feet nearer each time. A dull one may require fifty the model beginning a mile off or more, and coming a hundred feet nearer at each move."

The company were amused by all this but could not help seeing that there was a certain practical possibility about the scheme. Our two Annexes as we call them appeared to be interested in the project or fancy or whim or whatever the older heads might consider it. "I guess I'll try it" said the American Annex. "Quite so" answered the English Annex. "Why the first girl guessed about her own intentions it is hard to say. What" "Quite so" referred to it would not be easy to determine. But these two expressions would decide the nationality of our two young ladies if we met them on the top of the great Pyramid.

I was very glad that Number Seven had interrupted me. In fact it is a good thing once in a while to break in upon the monotony of a steady talker at a dinner table, tea table, or any other place of social converse. The best talker is liable to become the most formidable of bores. It is a peculiarity of the bore that he is the last person to find himself out. Many a tirebrant I have known who is that capacity to borrow a line from Coleridge.

Was great, nor knew how great he was.

A ha, by the way which as I have remarked has in it a germ like that famous. He builded better than he knew of Emerson.

There was a slight lull in the conversation. The Mistress who keeps an eye on the course of things and feared that one of those *panis et melle* was impending in which everybody wants to say something and does not know just what to say begged me to go on with my remarks about the manufacture of poetry.

You use the right term, madam. I said. The manufacture of that article has become an extensive and therefore an important branch of industry. One must be an editor which I am not, or a literary confidant of a wide circle of correspondents which I am to have any idea of the enormous output of verse which characterizes our time. There are many curious facts connected with this phenomenon. Educated people—yes and many who are not educated—have discovered that rhymes are not the private property of a few noted writers.



blocking my literary pathway so that I can hardly find my daily papers.

What is the meaning of this rush into rhyming of such a multitude of people of all ages from the infant phenomenon to the oldest inhabitant?

Many of my young correspondents have told me in so many words I want to be famous. Now it is true that of all the short cuts to fame in time of peace there is none shorter than the road paved with rhymes. Byron woke up one morning and found himself famous. Still more notably did Rouget de l'Isle fill the air of France nay the whole atmosphere of freedom all the world over with his name wafted on the wings of the Marseillaise the work of a single night. But if by fame the aspirant means having his name brought before and kept before the public, there is a much cheaper way of acquiring that kind of notoriety. Have your portrait taken as a Wonderful Cure of a Desperate Disease given up by all the Doctors. You will get a fair likeness of yourself and a partial biographical notice and have the satisfaction if not of promoting the welfare of the community at least that of advancing the financial interests of the benefactor whose enterprise has given you your coveted notoriety. If a man wants to be famous he had much better try the advertising doctor than the terrible editor whose waste basket is a maw which is as insatiable as the temporary stomach of Jack the Giant killer.

You must not talk so said Number Five. I know you don't mean any wrong to the true poets but you might be thought to hold them cheap whereas you value the gift in others—in yourself too I rather think. There are a great many women—and some men—who write in verse from a natural instinct which leads them to that form of expression. If you could peep into the portfolio of all the cultivated women among your acquaintances you would be surprised, I believe to see how many of them trust their thoughts and feelings to verse which they never think of publishing and much of which never meets any eyes but their own. Don't be cruel to the sensitive natures who find a music in the harmonies of rhythm and rhyme which soothes their own souls if it reaches no farther.

I was glad that Number Five spoke up as she did. Her generous instinct came to the rescue of the poor poets just at the right moment. Not that I meant to deal roughly with them but the poets I have been forced into relation with have



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that posterity may not renege these seemingly dead poems, and give their author the immortality for which he longed and labored? It is not every poet who is at once appreciated. Some will tell you that the best poets never are. Who can say that you, dear unappreciated brother or sister, are not one of those whom it is left for after times to discover among the wrecks of the past, and hold up to the admiration of the world?

I have not thought it necessary to put in all the *interpellations* as the French call them, which broke the course of this somewhat extended series of remarks, but the comments of some of The Tetrads helped me to shape certain additional observations and may seem to the reader as of more significance than what I had been saying.

Number Seven saw nothing but the folly and weakness of the rhyming cranks as he called them. He thought the fellow that I had described as blubbering over his still-born poems would have been better occupied in earning his living in some honest way or other. He knew one chap that published a volume of verses and let his wife bring up the wood for the fire by which he was writing. A fellow says "I am a poet" and he thinks himself different from common folks. He ought to be excused from military service. He might be killed and the world would lose the inestimable products of his genius. I believe some of us think, said Number Seven, "that they ought not to be called upon to pay their taxes and their bills for household expenses like the rest of us."

If they would only study and take to heart Horace's *Ars Poetica* as the Professor it would be a great benefit to them and to the world at large. I would not advise you to follow him too literally of course for as you will see the changes that have taken place since his time would make some of his precepts useless and some dangerous, but the spirit of them is always instructive. This is the way somewhat modernized and accompanied by my running commentary in which he counsels a young poet—

Don't try to write poetry my boy when you are not in the mood for doing it—when it goes against the grain. You are a fellow of sense—you understand all that.

If you have written anything which you think well of show it to Mr. ——— the well-known critic to "the governor" as you call him—your honored father and to me



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we brought before me scores and hundreds of letters in which every shade of the great passion has been represented. What has most struck me in these amatory correspondences has been their remarkable sameness. It seems as if writing love letters reduced all sorts of people to the same level. I don't remember whether Lord Bacon has left us anything in that line—unless indeed, he wrote *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Sonnets*—but if he has I don't believe they differ so very much from those of his valet or his groom to their respective lady loves. It is always 'My darling' 'my darling'! The words of endearment are the only ones the lover wants to employ and he finds the vocabulary too limited for his vast desires. So his letters are apt to be rather tedious except to the personage to whom they are addressed. As to poetry it is very common to find it in love letters especially in those that have no love in them. The letters of bigamists and polygamists are rich in poetical extracts. Occasionally an original spurt in rhyme adds variety to an otherwise monotonous performance. I don't think there is much passion in men's poetry addressed to women. I agree with *The Dictator* that poetry is little more than the ashes of passion. It may show that the flame has had its sweep where you find it unless indeed it is shoveled in from another man's fireplace.

"What do you say to the love poetry of women?" asked the Professor. "Did ever passion heat words to incandescence as it did those of Sappho?"

The Counsellor turned—not to Number Five as he ought to have done according to my programme but to the Mistress.

"Madam," he said, "your sex is adorable in many ways but in the abandon of a genuine love letter it is incomparable. I have seen a string of women's love letters in which the creature enlaced herself about the object of her worship as that South American parasite which clasps the tree to which it has attached itself begins with a slender succulent network feeds on the trunk spreads its fingers out to hold firmly to one branch after another thickens hardens stretches in every direction following the boughs and at length gets strong enough to hold in its murderous arms high up in the air the stump and shaft of the once sturdy growth that was its support and subsistence."

The Counsellor did not say all this quite so formally as I have set it down here but in a much easier way. In fact, it is impossible to smooth out a conversation from memory with



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## HENRY DAVID THOREAU

HENRY DAVID THOREAU (1817-1862) was the only one of that famous Concord group of mid-century intellectuals named in the account of Emerson's life to be born in this small Massachusetts village. Except for the four unsocial years at Harvard, where he was graduated in 1837 and for those infrequent and brief trips memorialized in his writings (*A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, *Excursions*, *The Maine Woods*, *Cape Cod*, and *A Year in the Woods*), his entire life was spent in Concord. With his brother he taught in their own school for a couple of years, an occupation from which he escaped at the death of his brother. He joined the Transcendental Club and became a frequent contributor in the journal of this group, the newly founded *Dial*. At various times he supported himself at the family trade of pencil making. During two periods (1841-43 and 1847-48) he lived in the Emerson household. For the two-year stretch from July 4, 1843, to September 6, 1847, Thoreau rebelled and to the end of nature and of solitude retired to solitary living in a cabin beside Walden Pond. The account of this stay was one of the great books of the century—*Walden, or Life in the Woods*—which appeared in 1854. Only two books appeared during his lifetime, but (some essays in various magazines, unpublished manuscripts, verse, letters, and journals) his works were extended after his death to a collected edition of twenty volumes. The following essay first appeared in the *American* of Elizabeth P. Peabody (Boston, 1849) and is sometimes printed under the title *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*.

### Resistance to Civil Government

I HEARTILY accept the motto — "That government is best which governs least" — and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe — That government is best which governs not at all; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The



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After all the practical reason why when the power is once in the hands of the people a majority are permitted and for a long period continue to rule is not because they are most likely to be in the right nor because this seems fairest to the minority but because they are physically the strongest But a government in which the majority rule in all cases cannot be based on justice even as far as men understand it Can there not be a government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong but conscience?—in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment or in the least degree resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience then? I think that we should be men first and subjects afterward It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law so much as for the right The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation with a conscience Law never made men a whit more just and by means of their respect for it even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is that you may see a file of soldiers colonel captain corporal privates powder monkeys and all marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars against their wills eye against their common sense and consciences which makes it very steep marching indeed and produces a palpitation of the heart They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned they are all peaceably inclined Now what are they? Men at all? or small moveable forts and magazines at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the Navy Yard and behold a marine such a man as an American government can make or such as it can make a man with its black arts a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity a man laid out alive and standing and already as one may say buried under arms with funeral accompaniments though it may be

Not drum w    b a d nor a funeral note  
 A b s corpse to the m mparts we hurried  
 Not s id    d scha ged h s far well shot  
 O e the gra e where our hero we buried

The mass of men serve the State thus not as men mainly but as machines with their bodies They are the standing



have its machine and oppression and robbery are organized [say let us not have such a machine any longer. In other words when a sixth of the population of a nation which has undertaken to be the *refuge* of liberty are slaves and a whole country is unjustly overrun and conquered by a foreign army and subjected to military law I think that it is not too soon for honest men to rebel and revolutionize. What makes this duty the more urgent is the fact, that the country so overrun is not our own but ours is the invading army.

Paley a common authority with many on moral questions in his chapter on the Duty of Submission to Civil Government, resolves all civil obligation into expediency and he proceeds to say that so long as the interest of the whole society requires it that is so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconvenience it is the will of God that the established government be obeyed and no longer. — This principle being admitted the justice of every particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the danger and grievance on the one side and of the probability and expense of redressing it on the other. Of this he says every man shall judge for himself. But Paley appears never to have contemplated those cases to which the rule of expediency does not apply in which a people as well as an individual must do justice cost what it may. If I have unjustly wrested a plank from a drowning man I must restore it to him though I drown myself. This according to Paley would be convenient. But he that would save his life must have a case shall lose it. This people must cease to hold slaves and to make war on Mexico though it cost them their existence as a people.

In their practice nations agree with Paley but does any one think that Massachusetts does exactly what is right at the present crisis?

A drab of state a cloth-csler but,  
To have her train borne up and her soul trail in the dirt."

Practically speaking, the opponents to a reform in Massachusetts are not a hundred thousand politicians at the South but a hundred thousand merchants and farmers here who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico cost what it may. I quarrel not with far-off foes but with those who near at home co-operate with, and do





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chiefly of editors and men who are politicians by profession  
 ■ I think what ■ it to any independent inelligent and  
 respectable man what decision they may come to shall we not  
 have the advantage of his wisdom and honesty nevertheless?  
 Can we not count upon some independent votes? Are there  
 not many individuals in the country who do not attend con-  
 ventions? But no I find that the respectable man so called  
 has immediately drifted from his position and despairs of his  
 country when his country has more reason to despair of him  
 He forthwith adopts one of the candidates thus selected as the  
 only available one thus proving that he is himself available  
 for any purposes of the demagogue His vote is of no more  
 worth than that of any unprincipled foreigner or hireling na-  
 tive who may have been bought Oh for a man who is a man  
 and, as my neighbor says has a bone in his back which you  
 cannot pass your hand through! Our statistics are at fault  
 the population has been returned too large How many men  
 are there to a square thousand miles in this country? Hardly  
 one. Does not America offer any inducement for men to settle  
 here? The American has dwindled into an Odd Fellow —  
 one who may be known by the development of his organ of  
 pregonousness and a manifest lack of intellect and cheerful-  
 self reliance whose first and chief concern in coming into  
 the world is to see that the alms houses are in good repair  
 and, before yet he has lawfully donned the virile garb to col-  
 lect a fund for the support of the widows and orphans that  
 may be who in short ventures to live only by the aid of the  
 mutual insurance company which has promised to bury him  
 decently

It is not a man's duty as a matter of course to devote him-  
 self to the eradication of any even the most enormous wrong  
 he may at all properly have other concerns to engage him but it  
 ■ his duty at least to wash his hands of it and if he gives it  
 no thought longer not to give it practically his support If I  
 devote myself to other pursuits and contemplations I must  
 first see ■ least that I do not pursue them sitting upon an  
 other man's shoulders I must get off him first that he may  
 pursue his contemplations too See what gross inconsistency  
 is tolerated I have heard some of my townsmen say I should  
 like to have them order me out to help put down an insurrec-  
 tion of the slave or to march to Mexico — see if I would  
 go and yet these very men have each directly by their al-  
 legiance and indirectly at least by their money furnished  
 a substitute The soldier is applauded who refuses to serve in



until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults and do better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

One would think that a deliberate and practical denial of its authority was the only offense never contemplated by government else why has it not assigned its definite its suitable and proportionate penalty? If a man who has no property receives but once to earn nine shillings for the State he is put in prison for a period unlimited by any law that I know and determined only by the discretion of those who placed him there but if he should steal ninety times nine shillings from the State he is soon permitted to go at large again.

If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government let it go let it go perchance it will wear smooth—certainly the machine will wear out. If the injustice has a spring or a pulley or a rope or a crank exclusively for itself then perhaps you may consider whether the remedy will not be worse than the evil but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another then I say break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see at any rate that I do not lead myself to the wrong which I condemn.

As for adopting the ways which the State has provided for remedying the evil I know not of such ways. They take too much time and a man's life will be gone. I have other affairs to attend to. I came into this world not chiefly to make this a good place to live in but to live in it be it good or bad. A man has not a very thing to do but something and because he cannot do very much it is not necessary that he should do something wrong. It is not my business to be petitioning the governor or the legislature any more than it is theirs to petition me and if they should not hear my petition what should I do then? But in this case the State has provided no way its very Constitution forbids it. This may seem to be harsh and stubborn and unconciliatory but it is to treat with the utmost



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kindness and consideration the only spirit that can appreciate or deserve it. So is all change for the better like birth and death which convulse the body.

I do not hesitate to say that those who call themselves abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property from the government of Massachusetts and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them. I think that it is enough if they have God on their side without waiting for that other one. Moreover any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already.

I meet this American government or its representative the State government directly and face to face once a year no more in the person of its tax gatherer this is the only mode in which a man situated as I am necessarily meets it and it then says distinctly recognize me and the simplest the most effectual and in the present posture of affairs the indispensable mode of treating with it on this head of expressing your little satisfaction with and love for it is to deny it then.

of slavery upon her sister—though at present she can discover only an act of inhospitality to be the ground of a quarrel with her—the Legislature would not wholly waive the subject the following winter.

Under a government which imprisons any unjustly the true place for a just man is also a prison. The proper place to-day for every place which Massachusetts has provided for her freer and less despondent spirits is in her prisons. To be put out and locked out of the State by her own act as they have already put themselves out by their principles. It is there that the fugitive slave and the Mexican prisoner on parole and the Indian come to plead the wrongs of his race should find them on that separate but more free and honorable ground, where the State places those who are not with her but against her—the only house in a slave-state in which a free man can abide with honor. If any think that their influence would be lost there and their voices no longer afflict the ear of the State that they would not be as an enemy within its walls they do not know by how much truth is stronger than error nor how much more eloquently and effectively he can combat injustice who has experienced a little in his own person. Cast your whole vote not a strip of paper merely but your whole influence. A minority is powerless while it conforms to the majority it is not even a minority then but it is irresistible when it clogs by its whole weight. If the alternative is to keep all just men in prison or give up war and slavery the State will not hesitate which to choose. If a thousand men were not to pay their tax bills this year that would not be a violent and bloody measure as it would be to pay them and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution if any such is possible. If the tax-gatherer or any other public officer asks me as one has done "But what shall I do?" my answer is "If you really wish to do any thing resign your office. When the subject has refused allegiance and the officer has resigned his office then the revolution is accomplished. But even suppose blood should flow. Is there not a sort of blood shed when the conscience is wounded? Through this wound a man's real manhood and immortality flow out and he bleeds to an everlasting death. I see this blood flowing now.

I have contemplated the imprisonment of the offender rather than the seizure of his goods—though both will serve the same purpose—because they who assert the purest right and consequently are most dangerous to a corrupt State, con-



yourself always tucked up and ready for a start, and not have many affairs. A man may grow rich in Turkey even if he will be in all respects a good subject of the Turkish government. Confucius said — If a State is governed by the principles of reason poverty and misery are subjects of shame if a State is not governed by the principles of reason riches and honors are the subjects of shame. No until I want the protection of Massachusetts to be extended to me in some distant southern port where my liberty is endangered or until I am bent solely on building up an estate at home by peaceful enterprise I can afford to refuse allegiance to Massachusetts and her right to my property and life. It costs me less in every sense to incur the penalty of disobedience to the State than it would to obey I should feel as if I were worth less in that case.

Some years ago the State met me in behalf of the church and commanded me to pay a certain sum toward the support of a clergyman whose preaching my father attended but never I myself. Pay it it said or be locked up in the jail. I declined to pay. But unfortunately another man saw fit to pay it. I did not see why the schoolmaster should be taxed to support the priest and not the priest the schoolmaster for I was not the State's schoolteacher but I supported myself by voluntary subscription. I did not see why the lyceum should not present its tax bill and have the State to back its demand as well as the church. However at the request of the select men I condescended to make some such statement as this in writing — Know all men by these presents that I Henry Thoreau do not wish to be regarded as a member of any incorporated society which I have not joined. This I gave to the town-clerk and he has it. The State having thus learned that I did not wish to be regarded as a member of that church has never made a like demand on me since though it said that it must adhere to its original presumption that time. If I had known how to name them I should then have signed off in detail from all the societies which I never signed on to but I did not know where to find a complete list.

I have paid no poll tax for six years. I was put into a jail once on this account for one night and as I stood considering the walls of solid stone two or three feet thick, the door of wood and iron a foot thick and the iron grating which strained the light I could not help being struck with the foolishness of that institution which treated me as if I were mere flesh and blood and bones to be locked up. I wondered that it should have concluded at length that this was the best use it could



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"Come boys it is time to lock up and so they dispersed and I heard the sound of their steps returning into the hollow apartments. My roommate was introduced to me by the jailer as a first rate fellow and a clever man. When the door was locked he showed me where to hang my hat and how he managed matters there. The rooms were whitewashed once a month and this one in least was the whitest most simply furnished and probably the neatest apartment in the town. He naturally wanted to know where I came from and what brought me there and when I had told him I asked him in turn how he came there presuming him to be an honest man of course and, as the world goes I believe he was. "Why" said he "they accuse me of burning a barn but I never did it. As near as I could discover he had probably gone to bed in a barn when drunk, and smoked his pipe there and so a barn was burnt. He had the reputation of being a clever man had been there some three months waiting for his trial to come on and would have to wait as much longer but he was quite domesticated and contented since he got his board for nothing and thought that he was well treated.

He occupied one window and I the other and I saw that if one stayed there long his principal business would be to look out the window. I had soon read all the tracts that were left there and examined where former prisoners had broken out and where a grate had been sawed off and heard the history of the various occupants of that room for I found that even here there was a history and a gossip which never circulated beyond the walls of the jail. Probably this is the only house in the town where verses are composed which are afterward printed in a regular form but not published. I was shown quite a long list of verses which were composed by some young men who had been detected in an attempt to escape who avenged themselves by writing them.

I pumped my fellow prisoner as dry as I could for fear I should never see him again but at length he showed me which was my bed and left me to blow out the lamp.

It was like being taken to a far country such as I had never expected to behold to lie there for one night. It seemed to me that I never heard the town-clock strike before nor the evening sounds of the village for we slept with the windows open which were beside the grating. It was to see my native village in the light of the middle ages and our Concord was turned into a Rhine stream and visions of knights and castles passed before me. They were the voices of old burghers that





was mended. When I was let out the next morning I proceeded to finish my errand and having put on my mended shoe joined a buckleberry party who were impatient to put themselves under my conduct and in half an hour—for the horse was soon tackled—was in the midst of a buckleberry field on one of our highest hills two miles off and then the State was nowhere to be seen.

Thus is the whole history of *My Prisons*."

I have never declined paying the highway tax because I am as desirous of being a good neighbor as I am of being a bad subject, and as for supporting schools I am doing my part in educating my fellow-countrymen now. It is for no particular item in the tax bill that I refuse to pay it. I simply wish to refuse allegiance to the State to withdraw and stand aloof from it effectually. I do not care to trace the course of my dollar if I could till it buys a man or a musket to shoot one with—the dollar is innocent—but I am concerned to trace the effects of my allegiance. In fact I quietly declare war with the State after my fashion though I will still make what use and get what advantage of her I can as is usual in such cases.

If others pay the tax which is demanded of me from a sympathy with the State they do but what they have already done in their own case or rather they abet injustice to a greater extent than the State requires. If they pay a tax from a selfish interest in the individual taxed to save his going to jail it is because they have not considered wisely how far they let their private feelings interfere with the public good.

Thus then, is my position at present. But one cannot be too much on his guard in such a case lest his action be biased by obstinacy or an undue regard for the opinions of men. Let him see that he does only what belongs to himself and to the hour.

I think sometimes. Why this people mean well they are only ignorant they would do better if they knew how why give your neighbors this pain to treat you as they are not inclined to. But I think again this is no reason why I should do as they do or permit others to suffer much greater pain of a different kind. Again I sometimes say to myself when many millions of men without heat, without ill will without personal feeling of any kind, demand of you a few shillings only without the possibility such as their constitution of retracting or altering their present demand and without the possibility on your side of appeal—any other millions why



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world If a man is thought free fancy free imagination free that which is not never for a long time appearing so be to him unwise rulers or reformers cannot fatally interrupt him

I know that most men think differently from myself but those whose lives are by profession devoted to the study of these or kindred subjects content me as little as any Statesmen and legislators standing so completely within the institution never distinctly and nakedly behold it They speak of moving society but have no resting place without it They may be men of a certain experience and discrimination and have no doubt invented ingenious and even useful systems for which we sincerely thank them but all their wit and usefulness lie within certain not very wide limits They are wont to forget that the world is not governed by policy and expediency Webster never goes behind government, and so cannot speak with authority about it His words are wisdom to those legislators who contemplate no essential reform in the existing government but for thinkers and those who legislate for all time he never once glances at the subject I know of those whose serene and wise speculations on this theme would soon reveal the limits of his mind's range and hospitality Yet compared with the cheap professions of most reformers and the still cheaper wisdom and eloquence of politicians in general his are almost the only sensible and valuable words and we thank Heaven for him Comparatively he is always strong original and above all practical Still his quality is not wisdom but prudence The lawyer's truth is not truth but consistency or a consistent expediency Truth is always in harmony with herself and is not concerned chiefly to reveal the justice that may consist with wrong-doing He well deserves to be called as he has been called the Defender of the Constitution There are really no blows to be given by him but defensive ones He is not a leader but a follower His leaders are the men of '87 I have never made an effort, he says and never propose to make an effort I have never countenanced an effort and never mean to countenance an effort to disturb the arrangement as originally made by which the various States came into the Union Still thinking of the sanction which the Constitution gives to slavery he says Because it was a part of the original compact—let it stand Notwithstanding his special acuteness and ability he is unable to take a fact out of its merely political relations and behold it as it lies absolutely to be disposed of by the intellect—what for instance it behoves a man to do here in America



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solute ■ a limited monarchy from a limited monarchy to a  
 democracy ■ a progress toward a true respect for the in-  
 dividual Is a democracy such as we know it the last improve-  
 ment possible in government? Is it not possible to take a step  
 further towards recognizing and organizing the rights of man?  
 There will never be a really free and enlightened State until  
 the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and in-  
 dependent power from which all its own power and authority  
 are derived and treats him accordingly I please myself with  
 imagining a State ■ last which can afford to be just to all men  
 and ■ treat the individual with respect as a neighbor which  
 even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose if a  
 few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it nor em-  
 braced by ■ who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fel-  
 low men A State which bore this kind of fruit and suffered  
 it to drop off as fast as it ripened would prepare the way for a  
 still more perfect and glorious State which also I have im-  
 agined but not yet anywhere seen



ter days the spectacle is mightily augmented, as to cost splendor and variety. There is a chief personage—Rex—and if I remember rightly neither this king nor any of his great following of subordinates is known to any outsider. All these people are gentlemen of position and consequence and it is a proud thing to belong to the organization so the mystery in which they hide their personality is merely for romance's sake and not on account of the police.

Mardi-Gras is of course a relic of the French and Spanish occupation but I judge that the religious feature has been pretty well knocked out of it now. Sir Walter has got the advantage of the gentlemen of the cowl and rosary and he will stay. His medieval business supplemented by the monstrosities and the oddities and the pleasant creatures from fairy land is finer to look at than the poor fantastic inventions and performances of the reveling rabble of the priest's day and serves quite as well perhaps to emphasize the day and admonish men that the grace lies between the worldly season and the holy one is reached.

This Mardi-Gras pageant was the exclusive possession of New Orleans until recently. But now it has spread to Memphis and St. Louis and Baltimore. It has probably reached its limit. It is a thing which could hardly exist in the practical North; would certainly last but a very brief time as brief a time as it would last in London. For the soul of it is the romantic not the funny and the grotesque. Take away the romantic mysteries the kings and knights and big-sounding titles and Mardi-Gras would die down there in the South. The very feature that keeps it alive in the South—girly girly romance—would kill it in the North or in London. Puck and Punch and the press universal would fall upon it and make merciless fun of it and its first exhibition would also be its last.

Against the crimes of the French Revolution and of Bonaparte may be set two compensating benefactions: the Revolution broke the chains of the *ancien régime* and of the Church and made a people of abject slaves a nation of freemen and Bonaparte introduced the setting of merit above birth and also so completely stripped the divinity from royalty that, whereas crowned heads in Europe were gods before they are only men since a god can never be gods again but only figure-heads and an example for their acts like common clay. Such benefactions should compensate the temporary harm which Bona-



of character can be traced rather more easily to Sir Walter's influence than to that of any other thing or person.

One may observe by one or two signs how deeply that influence penetrated and how strongly it holds. If one take up a Northern or Southern literary periodical of forty or fifty years ago he will find it filled with wordy windy flowery eloquence romanticism sentimentality—all imitated from Sir Walter and sufficiently badly done too—innocent travellers of his style and methods in fact. This sort of literature being the fashion in both sections of the country there was opportunity for the fairest competition and as a consequence the South was able to show as many well known literary names proportioned to population as the North could.

But a change has come and there is no opportunity now for a fair competition between North and South. For the North has thrown out the old inflated style whereas the Southern writer still clings to it—clings to it and has a restricted market for his wares as a consequence. There is as much literary talent in the South now as ever there was of course but its work can gain but slight currency under present conditions. The authors write for the past not the present they use obsolete forms and a dead language. But when a Southerner of genius writes modern English his book goes upon crutches no longer but upon wings and they carry it swiftly all about America and England and through the great English reprint publishing houses of Germany—as witness the experience of Mr. Cable and Uncle Remus—two of the very few Southern authors who do not write in the Southern style. Instead of three or four widely known literary names the South ought to have a dozen or two—and will have them when Sir Walter's time is out.

A curious exemplification of the power of a single book for good or harm is shown in the effects wrought by *Don Quixote* and those wrought by *I a hoe*. The first swept the world's admiration for the medieval chivalry silliness out of existence and the other restored it. As far as our South is concerned the good work done by Cervantes is pretty nearly as dead letter so effectually has Scott's pernicious work undermined it.



know personally—is a moody and abstracted middle aged gentleman, who fails to catch your name on introduction and seems the aviar of the commonplace. The witty and ferocious crue whom your fancy had painted as a literary cannibal with a morbid appetite for tender young poets—the writer of those caustic and scholarly reviews which you never neglect to read—destroys the un lif like portrait you had drawn by appearing before you as a personage of slender limb and deprecating glance who stammers and makes a painful spectacle of himself when you ask him his opinion of "The Glees of the Gulches" by Popocatepetl Jones. The slender dark haired novelist of your imagination with epigrammatic points to his mustache suddenly takes the shape of a short, smoothly shaven blond man, whose conversation does not sparkle at all and you were on the lookout for the most brilliant of verbal fireworks. Perhaps it is a dramatist you have idealized. Fresh from witnessing his delightful comedy of manners you meet him face to face only to discover that his own manners are anything but delightful. The play and the playwright are two very distinct entities. You grow skeptical touching the truth of Buffon's assertion that the style is the man himself. Who that has encountered his favorite author in the flesh has not sometimes been a little if not wholly disappointed?

After all, is it not expecting too much to expect a novelist to talk as cleverly as the clever characters in his novels? Must a dramatist necessarily go about armed to the teeth with crisp dialogue? May not a poet be allowed to lay aside his singing robes and put on a conventional dress suit when he dines out? Why is it not permissible in him to be as prosaic and tiresome as the rest of the company? He usually is





The squirrel would shoot up the tree making only a brown streak from the bottom to the top would seize his nut and rush down again in the most precipitate manner Half way to his den which was not over three rods distant he would rush up the trunk of another tree for a few yards to make an observation No danger being near he would dive into his den and reappear again in a twinkling

Returning for another nut he would mount the second tree again for another observation Satisfied that the coast was clear he would spin along the top of the ground to the tree that bore the nuts shoot up it as before seize the fruit and then back again to his retreat

Never did he fail during the half hour or more that I watched him to take an observation on his way both to and from his nest It was snatch and run with him Something seemed to say to him all the time Look out! look out! "The cat! "The hawk! "The owl! "The boy with the gun!

It was a bleak December morning the first fine flakes of a cold driving snowstorm were just beginning to sift down and the squirrel was eager to finish harvesting his nuts in time It was quite touching to see how hurried and anxious and nervous he was I felt like going out and lending a hand The nuts were small poor pig nuts and I thought of all the gasping he would have to do to get at the scanty meat they held My little boy once took pity on a squirrel that lived on the wall near the gate and cracked the nuts for him and put them upon a small board shelf in the tree where he could sit and eat them at his ease

The red squirrel is not as provident as the chipmunk He lays up stores irregularly by fits and starts he never has enough put up to carry him over the winter hence he is more or less active all the season Long before the December snow the chipmunk has for days been making hourly trips to his den with full pockets of nuts or corn or buckwheat, till his burrows are enough to carry him through to April He need not and I believe does not set foot out of doors during the whole winter But the red squirrel trusts more to luck.

As alert and watchful as the red squirrel is he is frequently caught by the cat My Nig as black as ebony knows well the taste of his flesh I have known him to be caught by the black snake and successfully swallowed The snake no doubt, lay in ambush for him

This is our ever present source of danger of the wild creatures, we know little about. Probably the only person in



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The coon is probably the most courageous creature among our familiar wild animals. Who ever saw a coon show the white feather? He will face any odds with perfect composure. I have seen a coon upon the ground beset by four men and two dogs and never for a moment losing his presence of mind or showing a sign of fear. The raccoon is clear gnu. The fox is a very wild and suspicious creature but curiously enough when you suddenly come face to face with him when he is held by a trap or driven by the hound his expression is not that of fear but of shame and guilt. He seems to diminish in size and to be overwhelmed with humiliation. Does he know himself to be an old thief and is that the reason for his embarrassment? The fox has no enemies but man and when he is fairly outwitted, he looks the shame he evidently feels.

In the heart of the rabbit fear constantly abides. How her eyes protrude! She can see back and front and on all sides as well as a bird. The fox is after her the owls are after her the runners are after her and she has no defense but her speed. She always keeps well to cover. The northern hare keeps in the thickest brush. If the hare or rabbit crosses a broad open exposure it does so hurriedly like a mouse when it crosses the road. The mouse is in danger of being pounced upon by a hawk and the hare or rabbit by the snowy owl or else the great horned owl.

A friend of mine was following one morning a fresh rabbit track through an open field. Suddenly the track came to an end as if the creature had taken wings—as it had after an unpleasant fashion. There on either side of its last foot impression were several parallel lines in the snow made by the wings of the great owl that had swooped down and carried it off. What a little tragedy was seen written there upon the white even surface of the field!

The rabbit has not much wit. I once when a boy saw one that had been recently caught, liberated in an open field in the presence of a dog that was being held a few yards away. But the poor thing to its presence of mind and was quickly caught by the clumsy dog.

A hunter once saw a hare running upon the ice along the shore of one of the Rangely lakes. Presently a lynx appeared in hot pursuit as soon as the hare found it was being pursued, it began to circle foolishly. This gave the lynx greatly the advantage as it could follow in a much smaller circle. Soon the hare was run down and seized.



run through a zigzag course and not lose a stroke or half a stroke of the wing by reason of any darting to the right or left. The clew is held with fatal precision. No matter how quickly nor how often the sparrow or the finch changes its course its enemy changes simultaneously as if every move was known to it from the first.

The same thing may be noticed among the birds in their love-charges. The pursuer seems to know perfectly the mind of the pursued. This concert of action among birds is very curious. When they are on the alert a flock of sparrows or juncos or cedar birds or snow buntings or blackbirds will all take flight as if there was but one bird instead of a hundred. The same impulse seizes every individual bird at the same instant as if they were sprung by electricity.

Or when a flock of birds is in flight it is still one body. One will it will rise or circle or swoop with a unity that is truly astonishing.

A flock of snow buntings will perform their aerial evolutions with a precision that the best trained soldiery cannot equal. Have the birds an extra sense which we have not? A brood of young partridges in the woods will start up like an explosion, every brown particle and fragment hurled into the air at the same instant. Without word or signal how is it done?





takes to play them May is a scherzo and goes like the wind Yesterday it was just beginning and to-day it is almost done If we could only hold it back! an outdoor friend of mine used to say And I say so too At the most generous calculation I cannot have more than a hundred more of such months to hope for and I wish the Master's baton would not hurry the tempo But who knows? Perhaps there will be another series of concerts in a better music hall

The world hereabout will never be more beautiful than it was eight or ten days ago with the sugar maples and the Norway maples in bloom and the tall valley willows in young yellow green leaf And now forsythia is having its turn How thick it is! I should not have believed it half so common Every dooryard is bright with its sunny splendor "Sunshine bush" it deserves to be called with no thought of disrespect for Mr Forsyth whoever he may have been I look at the show while it lasts In a week or two the bushes will all have gone out of commission, so to speak till the year comes round again Shrubs are much in the case of men and women the amount of attention they receive depends mainly on the dress they happen to have on at the moment In my next-door neighbor's yard there is a forsythia bush not exceptionally large or handsome that gives me as much pleasure as one of those wonderful tulip beds of which the Boston city gardeners make much account Are a million tulips all of one color crowded tightly together and bordered by a row of other tulips all of another color really so much more beautiful than a hundred or two of various tints loosely and naturally disposed? I ask the question without answering it though I could answer it easily enough so far as my own taste is concerned

Already the time is much to admire in the wild garden Spice bush blossoms have come and gone and now the misty shadows begin to whiten all the hedges and the borders of the wood while sassafras trees have put forth pretty clusters of yellowish flowers for the few that will come out to see them Sun bright, cold footed cowslips still hold their color along shaded brooks Marsh mangolds some critical people tell me we must call them That is a good name too but the flowers are no more mangolds than cowslips and with or without reason (partly it may be because my unregenerate nature resents the musty ~~like the w~~ ~~as brought up~~



once on the last day of April. The next morning one had dropped into an ideal summering place—a bit of thicket beside a pond and a lively brook—good shelter, good bathing, and plenty of insects—and from the first moment seemed to have no thought of looking farther. I see and hear him every time I pass the spot. The same leafless thicket (but it will be leafy enough by and by) is now inhabited by a catbird. I found him on the 6th already much at home feeding, singing, and mewing. Between him and his small high-colored neighbor there is no sign of rivalry or ill feeling, but if another catbird or a second warbler should propose settlement in that clump of shrubbery I have no doubt there would be trouble.

May-day brought me the yellow-throated vireo, the parula warbler, the white-throated sparrow, and the least flycatcher. The last two pretty late, by my reckoning. On the 7th came the warbling vireo, the veery—a single silent bird, the only one I have yet seen—the kingbird, the Maryland yellowthroat, the ovenbird, and the chestnut-sided warbler. In addition to the grosbeak before mentioned, then followed a spell of cold, unfavorable weather, and nothing more was listed until the 6th. That day I saw a Nashville warbler—several days tardy—a catbird, and a Swainson thrush. On May 7 I heard my first prairie warbler, and to-day has brought the oriole, the wood thrush, one silent red-eyed vireo (it is good to know that this voluble preacher can be silent), and the redstart. It never happened to me before I think to see the Swainson thrush earlier than the wood thrush. That I have done so this season is doubtless the result of some accident on one side or the other. The Swainson was a little ahead of his regular schedule. I feel sure, but on the other hand, it may almost be taken for granted that a few wood thrushes have been in the neighborhood for several days. The probability that any single observer will light upon the very first silent bird of a given species that drops into a township must be slight indeed. What we see we tell of, but that is only the smallest part of what happens.

Some of our winter birds still go about in flocks, notably the waxwings, the goldfinches, and the purple finches. Two days ago I noticed a goldfinch that was almost in full nuptial dress—a bright as he ever would be. I should say, but with the black and the yellow still running together a little here and there. Purple finches are living high—in two senses—just in present feeding on the pendent flower buds of tall beech trees. A bunch of six or eight that I watched the other day



## EUGENE FIELD

EUGENE FIELD (1850-1895) was born in St. Louis. His father (a lawyer who was counsel for Dred Scott) and his mother were transplanted Vermonters. His mother died when the boy was six and Eugene, with an older brother, went to live with his mother's cousin in Amherst, Mass. He went to a small private school and then for a year to Williams College. When his father died in 1869 the boy transferred to Knox College then to the University of Missouri. He did not wait to obtain a degree but at the age of twenty-two—following an unsuccessful attempt at acting—took all that was available of his \$8,000 patrimony for a tour of England and southern Europe. On his return in the following year he was married and the rest of his inheritance was spent on a honeymoon. Field worked for eight years on papers in St. Joseph, St. Louis, Kansas City and Denver. In 1883 he went to the *Chicago Morning News* (later named the *Record*) and spent the remaining twelve years of his life on its staff. He was among the first of the American newspaper columnists and his "Sharps and Flats" column brought him national fame. His chief interests were a love of Horace and book collecting. Both hobbies are reflected in his writings: published as *Echoes from the Sabine Farm* (1892) and the delightful essay in *Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac* (1896). He was known chiefly as a story writer, humorist, and poet. His principal works consist of collections of his short stories and half a dozen volumes of verse: *Little Boy Blue* and *Wyandottic Blythe and Nod* remain classics among poems for children. The accompanying selection is taken from *The House of the Episcopate of the Life of Ruben Baker* and of *His Wife Alice* (1896), a collection on the borderland between fiction and the essay.

### Other People's Dogs

WHEN I DISCOVERED one morning that my young sunflowers and my tomato vines had been cut down during the night by some lawless depredator I was mightily incensed. I had not supposed that there was anybody so mean as to commit such a wanton destruction. The value of the property destroyed was not large. I had paid but five cents apiece for the twenty tomato vines and the young sunflowers were a present from



to attempt to revive it with water which can be used with legal liberality only between the first of November and the first of May

By way of illustrating what a mockery our national Department of Agriculture is I will say that I wrote to Secretary Morton about the cutworms and asked that he suggest an antidote against the same. Although five weeks have elapsed since I dispatched that letter I have had no word of any kind from the Department of Agriculture. I feel the slight all the more keenly because I am a personal acquaintance of Secretary Morton, having been introduced to and shaken hands with him at the quadrennial convention of the Western Academy of Science at Omaha in 1884. Prompt attention to my letter was due on the score of old friendship. The Secretary of Agriculture will recognize his error in offending me if ever he becomes a candidate for the presidency. Reuben Baker never forgets an affront.

But though my sunflowers and my tomato vines suffered as I have narrated my potatoes were doing nicely. The potato patch is located in the back yard near the poplar trees. It is in the shape of the Big Dipper and I took the precaution to plant the potatoes in the new of the moon. The first planting never amounted to anything for the reason that I peeled them and cut out the eyes before putting them in their hills. I learned subsequently that this was as fatal a course as it were possible to pursue. You must never peel potatoes or cut but their eyes if you want them to grow. I do not know why this is so but it is. At any rate the second crop I planted was a success. Every day I dug down into the hills to see how the potatoes were progressing and I was thus enabled to keep track of the development of the tender fruit.

My young friend Budd Taylor provided me with a dozen ears of seed popcorn which I planted in a warm bright spot and which soon bristled up in splendid style. I think it likely that but for the birds I should have had a crop of popcorn sufficient to supply the Chicago market for I never before saw anything like that corn for luxuriance and thrift. How the birds ever found out about it will doubtless remain a mystery.

The birds I refer to proved to be blackbirds although for a time I mistook them for young crows. One morning I detected about three dozen of the poaching rogues stalking through the grass in the direction of my cornpatch and almost before I knew it the feathered rascals had played havoc with my promising crop of popcorn. Then I remembered that I





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beautiful) had planted a vast number of nasturtiums and red geraniums and under one of the oak trees had trained numerous graceful dainty vines which as I recall are known to horticultural amateurs as cobies.

In the twinkling of an eye the Baylor Leviathan swept these blossoming innocents out of existence and in other twinklings he wrought desolation among the peonies the pansies and other floral objects upon which the women folk had lavished a wealth of patient care. A bull in a china shop could hardly create the havoc which the Baylor pup with his one hundred and seventy five pounds of animal spirits wrought in our lawn. Next morning the lawn looked as if it had been honored with a nocturnal visitation from Burr Robbins' galaxy of domesticated wild beasts.

Curiously enough the Bayers thought it was very funny. I don't know why it is but it can't be denied that it is a fact that those acts which to other people's pups strike as a strangely improper become in our own pups the most natural and most much provoking performances in the world. I recall the anger with which neighbor Baylor drove neighbor Macleod's mastiff off his porch one evening because that mastiff attempted to make his way through the screen door behind which the family cat was visible. In this instance the Macleod mastiff was simply following the predominating instinct of the canine kind and neighbor Baylor hated the unreasonable beast for it. Yet I'll warrant me that while his own lubberly pup was prancing around over our flower beds neighbor Baylor regarded the performance as the most cunning and most charming divertisement in the world.

It is much the same way with children. If I were put upon oath I should have to admit that the very same antics which I regard as most seemly (not to say fascinating) in my own pretty little darlings I do not approve of at all when I see them attempted by the awkward homely children of my neighbors.



heartily recommend it to the general public while the additional merit of cheapness endears it to its thrifty upholders. We are all accustomed to talk vaguely about questions of burning interest and the absorbing problems of the day. Some of us even go so far as to have a tolerably clear notion of what these questions and problems are. It is but natural then that we should take a lively pleasure not in the persuasions and convictions of our neighbors about which we have learned ourselves about which we care very little but in the topics them care a great deal. Discussions rage on every side of us and the easy offhand cocksure verdicts which are so frankly confided to the world have become a recognized source of popular education and enlightenment.

I have sometimes thought that this feverish exchange of opinions received a fatal impetus from that curious epidemic rise in England a few years ago and known as the Lists of a Hundred Books. Never before had such an admirable opportunity been offered to people to put on what are commonly called frills and it must be confessed they made the most of it. The Koran the Analects of Confucius Spinoza Herodotus Demosthenes Xenophon Lewis's History of Philosophy the Saga of Burnt Njal Locke's Conduct of the Understanding—such and such only were the works unflinchingly urged upon us by men whom we had considered perhaps as human as ourselves whom we might almost have suspected of solacing their lighter moments with an occasional study of Rider Haggard or Gaboriau. If readers could be made by the simple process of deluging the world with good counsel these arbitrary lists would have marked a new intellectual era. As it was they merely excited a lively but unfruitful curiosity. Living movements Cardinal Newman reminds us do not come of committees. I knew indeed one impetuous student who rashly purchased the Grammar of Assent because she saw it in a list but there was a limit even to her ardor for eighteen months afterwards the leaves were still uncut. It is a striking proof of Mr. Arnold's inspired rationality that while so many of his countrymen were instructing us in this peremptory fashion he alone who might have spoken with authority declined to add his name and list to the rest. It was an amusing game he said, but he felt no disposition to play it.

Some variations of this once popular pastime have lingered even to our day. Lists of the best American authors, lists of



comedy? Was I a pessimist or an optimist and why? What were my favorite flowers and did I cultivate them? What books did I think young children ought not to read? At what age and under what impulses did I consider children first began to swear? What especial and serious studies would I propose for married women? What did I consider most necessary for the all around development of the coming young man? It appeared useless to urge in reply to these questions that I had never been to college never read a line of Greek never been married never taken charge of children and knew nothing whatever about developing young men. I found that my ignorance on all these points was assumed from the beginning but that this fact only made my opinions more interesting and piquant to the people as ignorant as myself. Neither did it ever occur to my correspondents that if I had known any thing about Greek comedy or college training I should have endeavored in turn my knowledge into money by writing articles of my own and should never have been so lavish as to give my information away.

That these public discussions or symposiums are however an occasional comfort to their participants was proven by the alacrity with which a number of writers came forward some years ago to explain to the world why English fiction was not a finer and stronger article. Innocent and short sighted readers wedded to the obvious had foolishly supposed that modern novels were rather forlorn because the novelists were not able to write better ones. It therefore became the manifest duty of the novelists to notify us clearly that they were able to write very much better ones but that the public would not permit them to do it. Like Dr. Holmes they did not venture to be as funny as they could. Thoughtful readers of mature age we were told are perishing for accuracy without sin but were prohibited lest the clash of broken commandments should be displeasing to polite female ears. A great deal of angry sentiment was exchanged on this occasion and a great many original and valuable suggestions were offered by way of relief. It was an admirable opportunity for any one who had written a story to confide to the world the theory of his art, to make self-congratulatory remarks upon his own standpoint, and to deprecate the stupid protestations of the public. When the echoes of these passionate protestations had died into silence we too comfort in thinking that Hawthorne had not delayed to write *The Scarlet*





to please say in its columns whether I thought new books or old books better worth the reading. It was the kind of question which an ordinary lifetime spent in hard study would barely enable one to answer but I found on examining some back numbers of the journal that it had been answered a great many times already and apparently without the smallest hesitation. Correspondents had come forward to overturn our ancient idols with no sense of insecurity or misgiving. One breezy reformer from Nebraska sturdily maintained that Mrs. Hodgson Burnett wrote much better stories than did Jane Austen while another intrepid person, a Virginian pronounced *The Vicar of Wakefield* dull and namby pamby declaring that one half the reading world would agree with him if they dared. Perhaps they would—who knows?—but it is a privilege of that half of the reading world to be silent on the subject. Simple preference is a good and sufficient motive in determining one's choice of books but it does not warrant a reader in conferring his impressions upon the world. Even the involuntary humor of such disclosures cannot win them forgiveness for the tendency to permit the individual spirit to run amuck through criticism is resulting in a lower standard of correctness. The true value of souls says Mr. Pater is in proportion to what they can admire and the popular notion that everything is a matter of opinion, and that one opinion is pretty nearly as good as another is immeasurably hurtful to that higher law by which we seek to rise steadily to an appreciation of whatever is best in the world. Nor can we acquit our modern critics of fostering this self assertive ignorance when they so lightly ignore those indestructible standards by which alone we are able to measure the difference between big and little things. It seems a clever and a daring feat to set up models of our own but it is in reality much easier than toiling after the old unapproachable models of our forefathers. The originality which dispenses so blithely with the past is powerless to give us a correct estimate of anything that we enjoy in the present.

It is but a short step from the offhand opinions of scientific or literary men to the offhand opinions of the crowd. When the novelists had finished telling us in the newspapers and magazines what they thought about one another and especially what they thought about themselves it then became the turn of novel readers to tell us what they thought about fiction. This sudden invasion of the Vandals left to the novelists but one resource but one undisputed privilege. They could permit



## EDWARD SANDFORD MARTIN

EDWARD SANDFORD MARTIN (1856-1939) was born at Willow brook, on the shore of Lake Owasco N Y After attending Phillips Andover Academy he was graduated in 1877 from Harvard where he helped found the undergraduate humorous magazine *The Lampoon* He received the honorary degree of Master of Arts from Harvard in 1916 a Doctor of Letters degree from the University of Rochester in 1917 and a Doctor of Laws degree from Lafayette in 1924 Following his graduation he was for a time in the State Department then briefly on the staff of the New York Sun He studied law was admitted to the bar in Rochester and became assistant editor of the *Rochester Union and Advertiser* In 1886 he married Julia Whitney of Rochester He was one of the founders of the national humorous weekly *Laff* became its first editor in 1883 and wrote editorials for it from 1887 to 1933 During twenty years of the same period (1893-1913) he wrote for *Harper's Weekly* and for half a dozen years (1929-1935) he contributed "The Easy Chair" department to *Harper's Monthly* He produced nearly a dozen and a half books among the earliest of which were several volumes of poetry *The Consolation of a Careless Man* (1905) is a group of short stories *In a New Century* (1908) is a collection of essays Others of his books deal with national and international affairs It is from his final volume *What's Ahead of Us* (1927) that the following is taken It was first published in 1920

## Our Convalescent World

THERE is no use in objecting because people don't do what you think they should especially in public concerns The affairs of this world and this life are very incompletely transacted by people who do as you think they should Most things that happen happen largely as a result of the activities of persons who do what you think they shouldn't or of the failure to function of persons on whom you had built hopes

Take the War! It was pretty much all a consequence of mistakes—the great preliminary mistake well-distributed of starting it von Kluck's mistakes that led up to the battle



and their efforts to supply such hands and plans are amusing when they do not threaten dangerous misdirection and delay.

We have had action no end. The world has passed the crisis of a terrific sickness and these are days of convalescence but of a convalescence hardly less anxious than the illness it succeeds. It is a convalescence full of pains and distempers threatened constantly with relapses needing careful watching and nursing all the time if the patient is to be saved from loss of vital powers and from age long invalidism. Certainly in such times people who can sit down and think have need to do it.

For there are more world problems nowadays than can be settled even at the polls. Indeed the most that will be done at the polls or in conferences or councils will be to record something thought out elsewhere by people sitting apart watching events and taking such counsel as comes of solitude and meditation. We have had a great row and delay and disagreement about the details of a mechanism designed to give a broken world a chance to get well of its fractures and bruises. The delay has held back the organization of the remnants left by the War and is generally credited with having done immense harm. But after all the delay is only more of the same disease that made the War. The War did not cure the disease it ran over into the making of the peace. What made the War? Vanity and fear, love of riches and love of power. What has delayed the peacemakers? The same—vanity and fear, love of riches and love of power. Those are the things that must be cured if the world is to get well and those are matters that can always be meditated in solitude. The cure of them is not political nor economic though politics and economics have their places in it. It is spiritual. It will come if it comes when the leadership of the world—the controlling leadership—can find the political road humanity should travel and when humanity is ready to travel it.

But it may be debated whether political leadership will ever find that road. Humanity may find it by mass instinct. The question as to whether leaders lead the herd or the herd crowds them where they ought to go is not altogether easy. People of great sobriety and judgment say that no leadership can control the world at this time that the great forces that are working in it will work out whether they are opposed or not breaking bonds and bans the courses shaped by driving instincts behind them.



with confidence for better times and a truer spirit in men. It sees a lot of good in the world both spiritual and material. It sees knowledge ever increasing and though it recognizes the danger signals and sees how slowly response comes to them and what grave impediments delay it it does not think a world so laboriously improved as this of ours is really going to pot. But even optimism though it has faith in the future hesitates about the present. It does not know how far it is to the turn in the road that leads in the direction of harmony and happiness nor how the going will be until we reach it.





its dead body. Their temperament is recorded in books of criticism, which are among the best mirrors of the present age.

Of course scholars must always study the past for what else is there to study? One cannot study the future. But the older pre-Darwinian nonspecializing writers were apt to be men of humanistic, artistic or religious natures. To entertain the reader and to touch his feelings was a part of their province. Their works reflect the emotional life that was in the air they breathed. Their very vehicles are restful because action as of waves is in them. They cradle us in motion and life is motion and the only rest we can know is to be absorbed and soothed by motion. The modern sciences, however such as anthropology, economics, psychology, sociology and the schools of writing which they generate do not treat either the past or the present with sympathy. They bid the past stand and deliver and bid the public stand and swallow. They do not afford that spiritual relief which religion and the fine arts supply and which humanity prizes above all else.

Nothing seems to survive the buffets of time except art and religion—in the extreme case Psalms and torsos. We worship them the more the less there is left of them. The recent critical epoch proves the point. Proud has been the scholar who could carry a shard to his den or identify a Ligurian *p. imitif* through a panel found in Spain. He who could clap on the label was crowned. In the meantime and while the wine tasters were growing more exquisite in their appreciations the vintages were growing worse. If one looks back over the past for a couple of generations one cannot help seeing that there has been a change for the worse in letters and in most of the fine arts. Our new poems, novels, operas and symphonies are not so robust as they were in 1850 nor does the public look forward to them with such piety as our fathers. A new poem by Longfellow, a work by George Eliot or Victor Hugo—to say nothing of a Brahms symphony—was awaited with reverent expectation as a thing whose incubation was important and whose future was to be perennial. To-day there is hardly a pause between the package and the wastepaper basket. Haste rules both composition and consumption.

I used to believe when speculating on those mysterious conditions that give birth to poetry that the mystery must be ruled by some conjunction of the planets which drives the quills of the poets so fluently and pours out inspiration.



clocks of the old handicrafts have ticked? Such a book when seen casually on a friend's table seems to furnish his whole house.

In the middle of the nineteenth century certain amateurs became aware of a gradual impoverishment that was creeping over all the handicrafts. They sought to remedy this by intensive cultivation, and to breathe artificial oxygen into the current handwork. Yet the older wallpapers remain more interesting, calmer, better than even those made under the eye of William Morris. The truth is that art and letters speak a language that comes from behind the work, not from within it. What makes us happy in art and letters is the power in them that has been unconsciously absorbed by the artist, and is unconsciously conveyed to us by his work. For want of a better word I have been using the idea of *leisure* to express the mystery. *Leisure* is a laic and secular word which points toward the gateway of spiritual truth much as the word *contemplation*, tinged as it is with religion, points in the same direction, and both of them imply receptivity, a reliance on some solution which shall swim into our minds without aid from us, a half-consciousness that our own faculties are part of the operations of Nature. This knack of a loose and dreamy attention seems to be lost to the world for the time being, and the loss prevents our seeing life in the enormous perspectives in which it really looms.

I suspect that a clue to the trouble is to be found in the phenomenon known to all painters and described by Sir Joshua in his lectures—that the eye loses faculty if rigidly focused.

Contract on kills feeling, and feeling is a gift that must be spontaneous. Emotion is a fluid that connects all the provinces of our being, and though we name one of them painting, another poetry, another religion, they are all interactive and cannot be kept apart by bullheads, or even intelligibly distinguished from one another. Does not everyone recognize the religious feeling in the *Pickwick Papers*? The quality that has preserved the tragic glory of the *Iliad* is the huge enveloping piety behind it. The ground swell of emotion in the *Iliad* is very different from the human sentiment of *Pickwick*, yet the glow in both books comes from the depths of a pervading verence.

Our contemporaries are not in sympathy with the gentleness and largeness of the elder time. Their relations require



ship through the hordes of modern half savage invaders till everyone was vitalized Shakespeare puts in a phrase the whole spirit of the Renaissance when he says —

The books the arts the academes  
That show contain and nourish all the world

In nothing did the Cinque Cento show its mental grasp and the bigness of its nature more than in thus seizing upon Greece and Rome as a single influence which was to inspire not only the mind but the character of the moderns Sir Philip Sidney with his enthusiasm with the nobility of his private life and with the dazzling apotheosis that followed an early death did more for the advancement of arts and letters in England than the foundation of half a dozen colleges



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tension their nervousness an edge Our novelists dramatists painters have been hardening their voices and sharpening their pencils They regard nature and human nature with a cold deliberate intellectual eye A jaded palate calls for pickles Ibsen Bernard Shaw Henry James and George Moore—nay the whole band of caterers to what used to be relaxation have become acidulated and bitter prophets of something that is senous and clever The overtones are lost, the technique is tortured The wizards of the day tell us that

his share. First one would come out with a scientific definition of it and a general air of mastery. Then another would show him up as an impostor and in so doing try and give the impression that he had a rather neat turn for it himself. Like all discussions of humor it was strenuous and was accompanied by the sound of heavy blows.

Now it is the commonest thing in the world to hear people call the absence of a sense of humor the one fatal defect. No matter how owlish a man is he will tell you that. It is a miserable falsehood and it does incalculable harm. A life without humor is like a life without legs. You are haunted by a sense of incompleteness and you cannot go where your friends go. You are also somewhat of a burden. But the only really fatal thing is the shamming of humor when you have it not. There are people whom nature meant to be solemn from their cradle to their grave. They are under bonds to remain so. In so far as they are true to themselves they are company for any one but outside their proper field they are terrible. Solemnity is relatively a blessing and the man who was born with it should never be encouraged to wrench himself away.

We have praised humor so much that we have started an insincere cult and there are many who think they must glorify it when they hate it from the bottom of their hearts. False humor worship is the deadliest of social sins and one of the commonest. People without a grain of humor in their composition will eulogize it by the hour. Men will confess to treason, murder, arson, false teeth or a wig. How many of them will own up to a lack of humor? The courage that could draw this confession from a man would atone for everything. No good can come from the mad attempts to define humor but there might be some advantage in determining how people should behave toward it. The first law is that humor is never overtaken when chased. It is the one valuable thing which it is worth no man's while to work for. If this could only be learned, one of the gloomiest and most nefarious of industries would be banished from the world.

So whether it is a man or a woman or a weekly paper or a department of a magazine the best advice in case of a deliberate attempt in this field is ■ give it up altogether.



## THE COMING OF FATE

When I seek out the sources of my thoughts I find they had their beginning in fragile Chance were born of little moments that shine for me curiously in the past Slight the impulse that made me take this turning at the crossroads trivial and fortuitous the meeting and light as gossamer the thread that first knit me to my friend These are full of wonder more mysterious are the moments that must have brushed me with their wings and passed me by when Fate beckoned and I did not see it when new Life trembled for a second on the threshold but the word was not spoken the hand was not held out and the Might have been shivered and vanished dim as a dream, into the waste realms of nonexistence.

So I never lose a sense of the whimsical and perilous charm of daily life with its meetings and words and accidents Why today perhaps or next week I may hear a voice and packing up my Gladstone bag follow it to the ends of the world.

## THE KALEIDOSCOPE

I find in my mind in its miscellany of ideas and musings a curious collection of little landscapes shining and fading for no reason Sometimes they are views in no way remarkable—the corner of a road a heap of stones an old gate But there are many charming pictures too as I read between my eyes and book the Moon washes the harvest fields with her chill of silver I see autumnal avenues with the leaves falling or swept in heaps and storms blow among my thoughts with the rain beating for ever on the fields Then Winter's upward glare of snow brightens or the pink and delicate green of Spring in the windy sunshine or cornfields and green waters and youths bathing in Summer's golden heat.

And as I walk about, places haunt me a cathedral rises above a dark blue foreign town, the colour of ivory in the sunset light now I find myself in a French garden, full of lilacs and bees and shut in sunshine with the Mediterranean lounging outside its walls Now in a little college library with dusts and the green reflected light of Oxford lawns—and again I hear the bells, reminding me of the Oxford hours.

## CONSOLATION

The other day depressed on the Underground I tried to cheer myself over the joys of our human lot. But there



## FINLEY PETER DUNNE

FINLEY PETER DUNNE (1867-1936) humorist, satirist, and creator of one of the most famous Irishmen since Saint Patrick, was Chicago born and reared. At the age of seventeen after a public-school education, he worked for sixteen years on half a dozen Chicago newspapers. At the turn of the century he moved to New York to edit the *Morning Telegraph*. He became the protégé of a wealthy New York family who helped him to become part owner of the *American Magazine* and later editor of *Collier's Weekly*. The lavishing, by these patrons, of more than a million dollars on Dunne snuffed him out as a writer. He retired to Long Island in 1911. Dunne wrote no books but those about the saloon keeper philosopher Mr. Dooley. Nine of the ten books were published before his retirement. His compositions are all for one instrument but that Harp has many strings. The accompanying selection is taken from *Mr. Dooley's Opinions* (1901).

### The City as a Summer Resort

"WHERE'S DORSEY the plumber these days?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"Haven't ye heard?" said Mr. Dooley. "Dorsey's become a country squire. He's landed gentry like me folks in the old part. He lives out among the burrows and the bugs in a house that looks like a cuckoo clock. In an hour or two ye'll see him go by to catch the five five. He won't catch it because there ain't anny five five. The laird that makes up the time table found last week that if he didn't get away arlier he cudden't take his girl for a buggy ride and he's changed the five five to four forty-eight. Dorsey will wait for the six seven and he'll find that it don't stop at Paradise Manor where he lives on Saturdays and Wendsdays except Fridays in Lent. He'll get home at eleven o'clock and if his wife's forgot to lave the lantern in the deepo he'll crawl up to the house on his hands and knees. I see him last night in at the drug store buyin' the peppermint for his face. 'Tis a grand life in the country," says he. "Far," he says, "from the madding crowd," says he. "Ye have no idee," he says, "how good it makes a man feel," he says, "to



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that I am says I An I counted as far as I knew an conducted a flock iv sheep in a steeple chase an I d just begun fr to wondher how th las thing I thought iv came into me head whin a dog started a howl in th yard They was a frind iv this dog in th net house that answered him an they had a long chat. Some other dogs butted in to be companionable I heerd Hogan rollin in bed an thn I heerd him gorn out to get a drink iv wather He thapped over a chair befor he lighted a match to look at th clock It seemed like an hour befor he got back to bed Be this time th dogs was tired an I was thinkin I d take a nap whin a bunch iv crickets undher me windows begun fr a discourse I ve heerd iv th crickets on th hearth Hunnissy an I used to think they were all th money but anny time they get on me hearth I buy me a pound iv insect powdher I d rather have a pianola on th hearth anny day an Gawd save me fr m that! An so twas dogs an mosquitos an crickets an mosquitos an a scratch owl an mosquitos an a whip poor will an mosquitos an cocks beginnin to crow at two in th mornin an mosquitos so that whin th sun bounced up an punched me in th eye at four I knew what th thruth is that th counthry a th noisiest place in th wurld Mind ye there s a roar in th city but in th counthry th noises beats on ye er ear like carpet tacks bein driven into th dhrum. Between th chirp iv a cricket an th chirp iv th hammer at th mills I ll take th hammer I can go to sleep in a boiler shop but I spent th rest iv that night at Hogan s settin in th bath tub

I saw him in th mornin at breakfast. We had canned peaches an condnsed milk Ye have ye er valse says he Aren t ye goin to stay out? I am not, says I Whin th first rattler goes by ye ll see me on th platform ffein th peace an quite iv th counthry fr th turnood an heat I says an food iv a gr eat city I says Stay on th farm says I Commune I says with nature I says Enjoy I says th simple rustic life iv th merry farmer boy that goes whistlin to his wurruk befor breakfast, says I But I must go back I says Yo th city I says where there is nawthin to eat but what ye want an nawthin to drink but what ye can buy I says Where th dust is la d be th sprinklin cart, where th ice man comes reglar an th roof garden is in bloom an ye re waked got be th sun but be th milkman I says I want to be near a doctor wh a I m sick an near eatable food whin I m hungry an where I can put me hand out early in th mornin an hook in a newspaper says I Th city says I is th ony summer



## CHARLES S. BROOKS

CHARLES STEPHEN BROOKS (1878-1934) a Clevelander by birth and residence, followed his graduation from Yale in 1900 by a fifteen year career in business. His fealty to a printing concern was increasingly displaced by his devotion to writing. His books include publications in diverse genres. Among his first titles were four collections of essays: *Journeys* (1913), *By God* (1915), *There's Pippins and Cheese to Come* (1917), *Chimney Pot Papers* (1919) and *Hints to Pilgrims* (1921). These were followed by a novel, *Luca Saito* and a few little plays for little theaters—*Happen Wharf* and *A Window in the Inn*. He was founder and later president of Cleveland's little theater the Playhouse. His final books were a series of leisurely and discursive accounts of his bicycling travels—*Roundabout to Canterbury* (1926), *Roads to the North* (1928), *English Spring* (1932) and *An Italian Winter* (1933). The following selection is taken from *Chimney Pot Papers*.

### On the Difference Between Wit and Humor

I AM NOT sure that I can draw an exact line between wit and humor. Perhaps the distinction is so subtle that only those persons can decide who have long white beards. But even an ignorant man, so long as he is clear of Bedlam, may have an opinion.

I am quite positive that of the two, humor is the more comfortable and more livable quality. Humorous persons, if their gift is genuine and not a mere shine upon the surface, are always agreeable companions and they sit through the evening best. They have pleasant mouths turned up at the corners. To these corners the great Master of marionettes has fixed the strings and he holds them in his nimblest fingers to twitch them at the slightest jest. But the mouth of a merely witty man is hard and sour until the moment of its discharge. Nor is the flash from a witty man always comforting, whereas a humorous man radiates a general pleasure and is like another candle in the room.

I admire wit but I have no real liking for it. It has been too often employed against me whereas humor is always an ally. It never points an impertinent finger into my defects. Humorous persons do not sit like explosives on a fuse. They are safe and easy comrades. But a wit's tongue is as sharp as a donkey's stick. I may gallop the faster for its prodding yet the touch behind is too persuasive for any comfort.

Wit is a lean creature with sharp inquiring nose whereas humor has a kindly eye and comfortable girth. Wit if it be necessary uses malice to score a point—like a cat it is quick to jump—but humor keeps the peace in an easy chair. Wit has a better voice in a solo but humor comes into the chorus best. Wit is as sharp as a stroke of lightning whereas humor is diffuse like sunlight. Wit keeps the season's fashions and is precise in the phrases and judgments of the day but humor is concerned with homely eternal things. Wit wears silk but humor in homespun endures the wind. Wit sets a snare whereas humor goes off whistling without a victim in its mind. Wit is sharper company at table but humor serves better in mischance and in the rain. When it tumbles wit is sour but humor goes uncomplaining without its dinner. Humor laughs at an other's jest and holds its sides while wit sits wrapped in study for a lively answer. But it is a workaday world in which we live where we get mud upon our boots and come weary to the twilight—it is a world that grieves and suffers from many wounds in these years of war and therefore I think of my acquaintances it is those who are humorous in its best and truest meaning rather than those who are witty who give the more profitable companionship.

And then also there is wit that is not wit. As someone has written

Nor ever noise for wit on me could pass  
When thro' the braying I discern'd the ass

I sat lately at dinner with a notoriously witty person (a really witty man) whom our hostess had introduced to provide the entertainment. I had read many of his reviews of books and plays and while I confess their wit and brilliancy I had thought them to be hard and intellectual and lacking in all that broader base of humor which aims at truth. His writing—catching the bad habit of the time—is too ready to proclaim a paradox and to assert the unusual to throw aside in contempt the valuable haystack in a fine search for a paltry needle.

His reviews are seldom right—as most of us see the right—but they sparkle and hold one's interest for their perversity and unexpected turns.

In conversation I found him much as I had found him in his writing—although strictly speaking it was not a conversation which requires an interchange of word and idea and is turn about. A conversation should not be a market where one sells and another buys. Rather it should be a bargaining back and forth and each person should be both merchant and buyer. My rubber plant for your victrola, each offering what he has and seeking his deficiency. It was my friend B—— who fairly put the case when he said that he liked so much to talk that he was willing to pay for his audience by listening in his turn.

But this was a speech and a lecture. He loosed on us from the cold soil of his intellect a steady flow of literary allusion—a practice which he professes to hold in scorn—and wit and epigram. He seemed torn from the page of Meredith. He talked like ink. I had believed before that only people in books could talk as he did, and then only when their author had blotted and scratched their performance for a seventh time before he sent it to the printer. To me it was an entirely new experience for my usual acquaintances are good common honest daytime woolen folk and they seldom average better than one bright thing in an evening.

At first I feared that there might be a break in his flow of speech which I should be obliged to fill. Once when there was a slight pause—a trifle was engaging him—I launched a frail remark but it was swept off at once in the renewed torrent. And seriously it does not seem fair. If one speaker insults—to change the figure—on laying all the cobbles of a conversation he should at least allow another to carry the tarpot and fill in the chinks. When the evening was over although I recalled two or three clever stories which I shall botch in the telling I came away tired and dissatisfied, my tongue dry with disuse.

Now I would not seek that kind of man as a companion with whom to be becalmed in a sailboat, and I would not wish to go to the country with him, least of all to the North Woods or any place outside of civilization. I am sure that he would sulk if he were deprived of an audience. He would be crotchety at breakfast across his bacon. Certainly for the woods a humorous man is better company for his humor in mischance comforts both him and you. A humorous man—and here lies

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outgalls. But is there anything more melancholy than the wit of another generation? In the first place this wit is intertwined with forgotten circumstance. It hangs on a fashion—on the style of a coat. It arose from a forgotten bit of gossip. In the play of words the sources of the pun are lost. It is like a local jest in a narrow coterie barren to an outsider. Sydney Smith was the most celebrated wit of his day but he is dull reading now. Blackwoods at its first issue was a witty daring sheet, but for us the pages are stagnant. I suppose that no one now laughs at the witticisms of Thomas Hood. Where are the wits of yesteryear? Yet the humor of Falstaff and Lamb and Fielding remains and is a reminder to us that humor to be real, must be founded on humanity and on truth.





professional prophets. They when confronted with the dawn of a new age insist on addressing in it a comprehensive a universal Whither? They when informed that with the approach of the 1930's the spiritual climate of the United States entered upon a noticeable change—from negation to affirmation from disillusion to a renewed faith from the satirical approach to the sympathetic approach from destructive analysis to constructive synthesis—the professional augurs upon hearing of such things immediately began to ask questions about American Civilization in the 1930's and American Destiny in the 1930's with separate chapters on the Thirties and Religion the Thirties and the Machine the Thirties and Woman the Thirties and children, music art architecture football labor radio aviation armaments the League of Nations in other words the Thirties and Everything.

We plain amateurs are content with much less than the cosmic vision. For us the advent of a new age means sitting down and looking so to speak, into the wood fire of the imagination and wondering what the times will bring not to Civilization or to Humanity but to our own particular little interest, or hobby or foible. In the present instance it is Jones. What will an age of affirmative sympathetic constructive synthesis do to promote our knowledge and understanding of Jones who is white thirty-eight, married and so forth? After all it is Jones who in the 1930's will attend or not attend the churches in whose future there is so much interest. He is the man who will live in the architecture of the thirties shout at the football games develop the aviation pay for the music and the radio and be seriously affected by the armaments. What will happen in him in the new books of the new decade?

Well to ask the question is to answer it. If the new books reflecting the new thought of the next ten years in America are to be affirmative if they are to be sympathetic if they are to strive for synthesis instead of not, then it ought to be a pretty good time for Jones. The years immediately ahead of us are bound to witness the rediscovery of the ordinary American man in his normal recognizable aspects—him and his wife and his young and his newspapers and his automobiles and his political parties and opinions and his industries and recreations. People in the new books ahead of us may be expected to resemble one's actual familiar neighbors—the familiar groups the familiar individuals the familiar behavior that so often find themselves submerged.

## SIMEON STRUNSKY

SIMEON STRUNSKY (1879-1948) was born in Vitebsk, Russia. He was brought to America in childhood. A New Yorker bred if not born, he attended the Horace Mann School, and was graduated from Columbia in 1900. For six years he was a department editor of the *New International Encyclopedia*. He turned to journalism and was for fourteen years an editorial writer on the *New York Evening Post*, then becoming an editor for four years. From 1924 until his death he was on the editorial staff of *The New York Times*. His column, "Topics of the Times," appeared on the editorial page. His first book, *The Patient Observer*, appeared in 1911. *Post Impressions* (1914) was another collection of miniature essays. New York City is frequently the theme of his writings—from *Belshazzar Court* (1914) devoted to the humors of apartment house life to *No Mean City* (1944). *Professor Latimer's Progress* (1918) and *King Akhnaton*, published a decade later, are novels—the latter a roman à clef built around Woodrow Wilson. The accompanying selection is the title essay of his book published in 1931, *The Rediscovery of Jones*, which presents a point of view about Americans in sharp contrast to the convictions frequently expressed by the writer of the next essay. II L. Mencken

### The Rediscovery of Jones

IN THE NEW mood which is reported to have come over the spirit of America toward the end of the 1920's and in the new books that should reflect this new temper, what is likely to happen to Jones? He is the person who figures so prominently in the returns of the United States Census. He is in the majority, white. He is in the majority of native white parentage. He is male. He is thirty-eight years old. He is married. He is an advertising solicitor. He lives at 1437 West Eleventh Street. In numbers he is together with his wife and children, his parents and cousins, several scores of millions. But in the solid books dealing with the American people and American civilization he was quite generally overlooked in the now elapsed 1920's. Will it be different in the current 1930's?

To raise the question of Jones on the threshold of a new age is normal procedure for us plain folk. We are not like the

the flame of my own temperament. It is the only way in which you may start out with Jones who lives at 1437 West Eleventh Street and sells life insurance and end up by penetrating to the real essential naked Jones who lives in a kashir kraal and worships strange fears and fetishes.

The argument is a sound one. Any individual Jones in Marietta, Ohio may become in respect to character manners morals, language clothes and dietary habits whatever the genius of his creator is able to make him. If you have the necessary ability you may do to Jones of Ohio what Dickens did to Micawber or Mark Twain to Huck Finn. You may write a book about a man named Jones who lives in Hartford and whose native language is Turkish; he was born in Angora of American missionary parents. You may have a man named Jones in Schenectady living in an igloo; he is the survivor of an Arctic expedition and slightly touched in the head. You may have a Jones in Mount Vernon, New York, who goes about naked; he is the leader of a sun cult and does his promenade in the privacy of his own grounds. The novelists and poets can do anything they please with Jones.

It is quite another matter with the men who write books on economics social science politics democracies schools elections, newspapers, movies, automobiles, factories and families. The man who deals with Jones in the mass with Jones of the United States Census cannot invoke the rights of his own vision and his own temperament. He is limited in his findings by certain basic data which no amount of creative inspiration can transcend. No amount of genius and no intensity of purpose will justify you in saying that the native language of the people of Hartford is Turkish or that the dominant style of domestic architecture in Schenectady is the igloo or that the 8-45 from Mount Vernon is crowded by commuters wearing just nothing. The latest finding of the New Physics asserts that truth is only statistical. There is no telling beforehand how one electron will behave. But one can foretell with certainty how ten billion electrons will behave. With respect to any one atom you may be a creative artist. With respect to the community of atoms you must stick to the statistical facts.

The heart warms as one peers into the future and sees the serious authors engaged in sticking to the facts about Jones the Crowd Man. If the subject is Jones and the American press the author will take a good deal of pains to ascertain what an American newspaper really contains. If the subject



practice among students of American civilization to refer to him as "the Babbitt in his warren"

The idea, of course is easily grasped. The Protochukchis dwell in caves dug out of the muddy banks of the Mulligatawney River two hundred inhabitants to a cave. The resultant living conditions sanitary ethical and aesthetic impressed the modern observer as being essentially and lovably human. But the average American family four people to the five room apartment suggested to the dispassionate eye of the observer nothing so much as a vermin swarm. Indeed that elegant and impressive phrase about the Babbitt and his warren compels the imagination to go further. It evokes the Protochukchi mother in her cave as giving birth to her young whereas the American mother apparently added to the population of the United States by littering. To such heights of sympathetic identification on the one hand (Protochukchi) and cool detachment on the other (Syracuse New York) did the study of civilization attain in the United States in the decade after 1920.

And what was true of the Protochukchis of Central Patagonia was also true in this interesting decade of the Hypercephalonians of New Guinea of the Malosols around North Cape, Siberia, the Microgelasmi of the Atlas Mountains and so forth (all my own discoveries). And on the other hand what was true of Indianapolis and Syracuse was also true of Ogden, Utah, of Montclair New Jersey and so forth. The manufacture and ceremonial sanctification of the annual supply of eye salve among the Malosols who are much given to trachoma, assumed a human significance that was utterly lacking in the problem of adequate hospitalization for the members of the National Education Association of the United States. Puberty rights among the Walarumbas of the upper Mackenzie were described with a passion quite absent in our accounts of child labor in the mill towns of the lower Connecticut. For it was the glory and charm of these primitive peoples that they had Folkways and Mores whereas the American people had only customs and manners.

### *Far Away and Long Ago*

As between the Protochukchis of Central Patagonia and the inhabitants of South Norwalk Connecticut the very slight attention accorded to the latter was not entirely due to their



about Nova Zembla could not help asking himself why it was necessary to go all the way to Nova Zembla. If one wanted a picture of thoroughly instructed and uninhibited child life it might be had in conveniently on Manhattan Island west of Ninth Avenue east of Third Avenue north of Ninety Sixth Street, and south of Wall Street.

Babies are all the time being born in two-room flats on Washington Street in the shadow almost of the Stock Exchange. Last rites for the dead are continually being performed in the kitchen living rooms of the Red Hook section of Brooklyn. Small boys go scouting at night through the hallways of the South Bronx and intrude upon intimate wooings. For scores of thousands of families in the New York of 1931 privacy is an unknown thing. Concerning the sophisticated and thoroughly enlightened boys and girls who grow up in such an environment the welfare workers and the juvenile courts know a great deal. As in the case of the Bohunks of the Pennsylvania coal regions these sophisticated children were a topic of intense popular concern in America before the war.

But in the decade of the 1930's the tenement children of New York, with their rich fund of information about the facts of life were forgotten by the student of Folkways and Mores. It was you see merely "Growing Up in the United States."

### *Modes of Speech*

As between the members of the Protochukchi Confederation and the inhabitants of Spokane Washington it was inevitable that the difference of esteem in which they were held should be reflected in a difference in literary treatment. One illustration we have already had in the case of the Protochukchi festival of capillary evacuation and the Babbitt in his warren. With certain exceptions to be noted further on it is easy to grasp the general rule of literary composition in the 1920's. It prescribed for the primitives a tone of sustained and respectful gravity and for the Americans a tone varying from the acid to the slap.

Thus a Malosol medicine man in northern Siberia was invariably described with the deference we may even say with the awe due to an elemental force to an original Datum of Nature. But an Episcopal bishop was something that had strayed in from the vaudeville stage. However when it was necessary to arraign the Church as an agency of war and





tions symphony orchestras in the Mississippi Valley lunch-  
 con clubs Florida vacations marriage life insurance famine  
 relief in China education and the like On these subjects it  
 was the rule that Jones's ideas were a travesty on the human  
 mind and Jones's practices were comic

Quite different was the method prescribed for such sub-  
 jects as night clubs saxophones the burlesque stage jazz,  
 comic strips prize fights and Coney Island Here were genuine  
 human values with much of the authenticity of the primitive  
 The style took on a corresponding elevation It was *de rigueur*  
 in the 1920's to speak of middle-class homes as warrens of  
 colleges as Babbitt halls and of bishops as smut hounds But  
 in appraising Mutt and Jeff the writer could not fail to recog-  
 nize with how sure a touch of genius Bud Fisher has seized  
 upon the dualistic machinery of the Ahriman-Ormuzd motive  
 which derives from the Set-Osiris motive which is only a  
 variant of the Cain and Abel motive For in essence Mutt  
 is always trying to do to little Jeff what Set did to Osiris—  
 namely slay and dismember him.

The United States Constitution as we have seen was a  
 something incurably grotesque But in writing of Buddy Bax-  
 ter and his Twenty Bouncing Beauties of Broadway Burlesk it  
 was strictly required that one should say "The ecstatic explo-  
 sion of Bacchic release induced by the projection upon the  
 Puritan inhibited American sensorium of two hundredweight  
 of provocative female flesh."

### *What Happened to Grandma*

Of the decorous writers of this period we have said that they  
 were always dignified on grave subjects as well as on light.  
 Their method of approach may be illustrated by the hypo-  
 thetical case of Grandmother Jones nee Perkins of the hill  
 country around Ridgfield Connecticut.

Let it be remarked, in passing that for the ultra primitive  
 students of civilization Grandmother Jones Perkins had of  
 course ceased to exist To grasp her utter insignificance it was  
 only necessary to compare her with the typical elderly woman  
 of the Protochukchi culture level Try to visualize this primi-  
 tive Patagonian dowager going about her daily routine  
 perched naked on a rock in midstream on the lookout for  
 dead fish coming down with the current or steeping manioc  
 roots in water for the family beer or rubbing the young chil-  
 dren of the tribe with lizard oil for eczema or perhaps at her



chuan mass! Goytre indications are negative Housework including light laundry but excluding table linen and sheets, consumes four and one half hours a day Church including the regular three Sabbatical prayer house exercises and such quasi secular cultus-retreational proliferations as the straw berry festival and the church-organ benefit picnic two hours daily Maintenance of clan and consanguinity bonds—writing to married daughters in California Nova Scotia and Detroit,—one hour weekly The average amount of garden space in cultivation has been estimated at 250 square feet for married women 450 square feet for spinsters and 150 feet for widows but varying considerably with the presence of individual art aptitudes and specialized technological employment—pump water collets putting up iron for the local market and so forth

The fate of Grandmother Jones Perkins in the years after the war was the fate of the whole Jones family Ignored by the ultra-primitivists and wrapped up beyond recognition by the culture specialists Jones the common man of the United States Census, of Ridgefield Connecticut, and of the New York Subway Jones in his measurable recorded numbers and qualities Jones in his daily observable habits and practices Jones with his newspapers autos schools machines and democracies virtually ceased to exist In his place flourished the formulas and the epigrams

Only toward the end of the decade did people begin to suspect that life in Jones was not quite extinct Beneath the weight of the theories the stencils and the wiss-cracks he went on breathing and with the approach of the 1930's he began to thrust his head up into the light The full rediscovery of the American Jones by serious American writers is a promise of the years ahead of us It will be a group Jones in harmony with the Census returns and an individual Jones resembling the man next door and across the aisle



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room for the British Isles. And yet, for all its size and all its wealth and all the "progress" it babbles of, it is almost as sterile artistically, intellectually, culturally as the Sahara Desert. There are single acres in Europe that house more first rate men than all the states south of the Potomac; there are probably single square miles in America. If the whole of the late Confederacy were to be engulfed by a tidal wave tomorrow, the effect upon the civilized minority of men in the world would be but little greater than that of a flood on the Yangtze Kiang. It would be impossible in all history to match so complete a drying up of a civilization.

I say a civilization because that is what, in the old days, the South had despite the Baptist and Methodist barbarism that reigns down there now. More, it was a civilization of manifold excellences—perhaps the best that the Western Hemisphere has ever seen—undoubtedly the best that these States have ever seen. Down to the middle of the last century and even beyond, the main hatchery of ideas on this side of the water was across the Potomac bridges. The New England shopkeepers and theologians never really developed a civilization; all they ever developed was a government. They were, at their best, tawdry and tacky fellows, oafish in manner and devoid of imagination; one searches the books in vain for mention of a salient Yankee gentleman as well look for a Welsh gentleman. But in the South there were men of delicate fancy, urbane instinct and aristocratic manner—in brief, superior men—in brief, gentry. To politics, their chief diversion, they brought active and original minds. It was there that nearly all the political theories we still cherish and suffer under came to birth. It was there that the crude dogmatism of New England was refined and humanized. It was there, above all, that some attention was given to the art of living—that life got beyond and above the state of a mere infliction and became an exhilarating experience. A certain noble spaciousness was in the ancient southern scheme of things. The Un-Confederate had leisure. He liked to toy with ideas. He was hospitable and tolerant. He had the vague thing that we call culture.

But consider the condition of his late empire today. The picture gives one the creeps. It is as if the Civil War stamped out every last bearer of the torch and left only a mob of peasants on the field. One thinks of Asia Minor resigned to Armenians, Greece and wild swine, of Poland abandoned to the Poles. In all that gargantuan paradise of the fourth rate



# H L MENCKEN

HENRY LOUIS MENCKEN Baltimorean born in 1880 of German parentage has published three volumes of reminiscences extending from 1880 to 1936 *Happy Days Newspaper Days* and *Heathen Days* After his graduation from the Baltimore Polytechnic Mencken became successively reporter and editor on local newspapers In New York, associated with George Jean Nathan Mencken edited first the *Smart Set* (1914 1923) and later the newly founded *American Mercury* (1924 1933) He became a stormy petrel of the postwar era—for many he was the vigorous and lusty spokesman of their generation by others he was perched on the eminence of mistrust and cordial dislike indicated in his more than a hundred page compilation of the abuse and insults heaped on him *Menckenia a Schimpflexikon* (1928) Many of his contributions to magazines were collected in a series of six volumes of *Prejudices* (1919 1927) An enduring contribution of Menckens to the culture and scholarship of the country has been his publication of *The American Language* First published in 1918 four editions of this book and two *Supplements* have been issued The following essay typical of Menckens extravagant and goading prose—written some four decades after Mark Twains similar theme diatribe *Enchanters and Enchantments*—is taken from the second series of *Prejudices* (1920)

## The Sahara of Bozart

Alas for the South! Her books have grown fewer—  
She never was much given to literature.

IN THE lamented J Gordon Coogler author of these elegiac lines there was the insight of a true poet He was the last bard of Dixie at least in the legitimate line Down there a poet is now almost as rare as an oboe-player a dry point etcher or a metaphysician It is indeed amazing to contemplate so vast a vacuity One thinks of the interstellar spaces of the colossal reaches of the now mythical ether Nearly the whole of Europe could be lost in that stupendous region of fat farms shoddy cities and paralyzed cerebrums one could throw in France Germany and Italy and still have

the device of searching for contraband whisky in women's underwear. There remains, at the top, a ghost of the old aristocracy—a bit wistful and infinitely charming. But it has lost all its old leadership to fabulous monsters from the lower depths—it is submerged in an industrial plutocracy that is ignorant and ignominious. The mind of the state as it is revealed to the nation, is pathetically naive and inconsequential. It no longer reacts with energy and elasticity to great problems. It has fallen to the bombastic inviolities of the camp-meeting and the chautauqua. Its foremost exponent—if so flabby a thing may be said to have an exponent—is a statesman whose name is synonymous with empty words, broken pledges and false pretences. One could no more imagine a Lee or a Washington in the Virginia of to-day than one could imagine a Huxley in Nicaragua.

I choose the Old Dominion not because I disdain it but precisely because I esteem it. It is by long odds the most civilized of the southern states now as always. It has sent a host of creditable sons northward—the stream kept running into our own time. Virginians even the worst of them, show the effects of a great tradition. They hold themselves above other southerners and with sound pretension. In one turns to such a commonwealth as Georgia the picture becomes far darker. There the liberated lower orders of whites have borrowed the worst commercial boudoirism of the Yankee and superimposed it upon a culture that, at bottom, is but little removed from savagery. Georgia is at once the home of the cotton-mill sweeter and of the most noisy and vapid sort of chamber of commerce of the Methodist parson turned Saviour and of the lynching bee. A self-respecting European, going there to live, would not only find intellectual stimulation utterly lacking—he would actually feel a certain insecurity as if the scene were the Balkans or the China Coast. The Leo Frank affair was no isolated phenomenon. It fitted into its frame very snugly. It was a natural expression of Georgian notions of truth and justice. There is a state with more than half the area of Italy and more population than either Denmark or Norway—and yet in thirty years it has not produced a single idea. Once upon a time a Georgian printed a couple of books that attracted notice—but immediately it turned out that he was little more than an amanuensis for the local blacks—that his works were really the products not of white Georgia, but of black Georgia. Writing afterward as a white man, he readily subsided into the fifth rank. And he is not only



progress thereafter. But the war not only cost a great many valuable lives—it also brought bankruptcy, demoralization and despair in its train—and so the majority of the first rate southerners that were left, broken in spirit and unable to live under the new dispensation cleared out. A few went to South America, to Egypt, to the Far East. Most came north. They were second their progeny is widely dispersed to the great benefit of the north. A southerner of good blood almost always does well in the north. He finds even in the big cities, surroundings fit for a man of condition. His peculiar qualities have a high social value and are esteemed. He is welcomed by the codfish aristocracy as one palpably superior. But in the south he throws up his hands. It is impossible for him to stoop to the common level. He cannot brawl in politics with the grandsons of his grandfather's tenants. He is unable to share their fierce jealousy of the emerging black—the cornerstone of all their public thinking. He is anaesthetic to their theological and political enthusiasms. He finds himself an alien to their seats of soul. And so he withdraws into his tower and is heard of no more. Cabell is almost a perfect example. His eyes for years were turned toward the past. He became a professor of the grotesque gen. alonging that decaying aristocracy affect it was only by a sort of accident that he discovered himself to be an artist. The south is unaware of the fact to this day it regards Woodrow Wilson and Col. John Temple Graves as much finer stylists and Frank L. Stanton as an infinitely greater poet. If it has heard which I doubt, that Cabell has been hooped by the Comstocks it unquestionably views that assault as a deserved rebuke to a fellow who indulges a lewd passion for fancy writing and is a covert enemy to the Only True Christianity.

What is needed down there before the vexatious public problems of the region may be intelligently approached is a survey of the population by competent ethnologists and anthropologists. The immigrants of the north have been studied at great length and any one who is interested may now apply to the Bureau of Ethnology for elaborate data as to their racial strains, their stature and cranial indices, their relative capacity for education and the changes that they undergo under American Kultur. But the older stocks of the south and particularly the emancipated and dominant poor white trash have never been investigated scientifically and most of the current generalizations about them are probably wrong. For example the generalization that they are purely Anglo-



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to the lowest class in their native country." Fanny Kemble Butler writing of the Georgia poor whites of a century later described them as "the most degraded race of human beings claiming an Anglo Saxon origin that can be found on the face of the earth—filthy lazy ignorant, brutal proud penniless savages." The Sunday school and the chautauqua of course, have appreciably mellowed the descendants of these savages and their economic progress and rise to political power have done perhaps even more but the marks of their origin are still unpleasantly plentiful. Every now and then they produce a political leader who puts their secret notions of the true the good and the beautiful into plain words to the amazement and scandal of the rest of the country. That amazement is turned into downright incredulity when news comes that his platform has got him high office and that he is trying to execute it.

In the great days of the south the line between the gentry and the poor whites was very sharply drawn. There was absolutely no intermarriage. So far as I know there is not a single instance in history of a southerner of the upper class marrying one of the bondwomen described by Mr. Bruce. In other societies characterized by class distinctions of that sort it is common for the lower class to be improved by extra legal crosses. That is to say the men of the upper class take women of the lower class as mistresses and out of such unions spring the extraordinary plebeians who rise sharply from the common level, and so propagate the delusion that all other plebeians would do the same thing if they had the chance—in brief the delusion that class distinctions are merely economic and conventional and not congenital and genuine. But in the south the men of the upper classes sought their mistresses among the blacks and after a few generations there was so much white blood in the black women that they were considerably more attractive than the unhealthy and bedraggled women of the poor whites. This preference continued into our own time. A southerner of good family once told me in a seriousness that he had reached his majority before it ever occurred to him that a white woman might make quite as agreeable a mistress as the octaroons of his juvenile fancy. If the thing has changed of late it is not the fault of the southern white man but of the southern mulatto women. The more slightly yellow girls of the region with improving economic opportunities have gained self respect, and so they are no



Saxon in blood This I doubt very seriously The chief strain down there I believe is Celtic rather than Saxon particularly in the hill country French blood too shows itself here and there and so does Spanish and so does German The last named entered from the northward by way of the limestone belt just east of the Alleghenies Again it is very likely that in some parts of the south a good many of the plebeian whites have more than a trace of negro blood Interbreeding under concubinage produced some very light half breeds at an early day and no doubt appreciable numbers of them went over into the white race by the simple process of changing their abode Not long ago I read a curious article by an intelligent negro in which he stated that it is easy for a very light negro to pass as white in the south on account of the fact that large numbers of southerners accepted as white have distinctly negroid features Thus it becomes a delicate and dangerous matter for a train conductor or a hotel keeper to challenge a suspect But the Celtic strain is far more obvious than any of these others It not only makes itself visible in physical stigmata—e g leanness and dark coloring—but also in mental traits For example the religious thought of the south is almost precisely identical with the religious thought of Wales There is the same naive belief in an anthropomorphic Creator but little removed in manner and desire from an evangelical bishop there is the same submission to an ignorant and impudent sacerdotal tyranny and there is the same sharp contrast between doctrinal orthodoxy and private ethics Read Caradoc Evans ironical picture of the Welsh Wesleyans in his preface to *My Neighbors* and you will be instantly reminded of the Georgia and Carolina Methodists The most booming sort of piety in the south is not incompatible with the theory that lynching is a benign institution Two generations ago it was not incompatible with an ardent belief in slavery

It is highly probable that some of the worst blood of western Europe flows in the veins of the southern poor whites now poor no longer The original strains according to every honest historian were extremely corrupt Philip Alexander Bruce (a Virginian of the old gentry) says in his *Industrial History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century* that the first native born generation was largely illegitimate One of the most common offenses against morality committed in the lower ranks of life in Virginia during the seventeenth century he says 'was bastardy' The mothers of these bastards he continues were chiefly indentured servants and had belonged

to the lowest class in their native country. Fanny Kemble Butler writing of the Georgia poor whites of a century later described them as "the most degraded race of human beings claiming an Anglo Saxon origin that can be found on the face of the earth—filthy lazy ignorant brutal proud penniless savages. The Sunday school and the chautauqua of course have appreciably mellowed the descendants of these "savages" and their economic progress and rise to political power have done perhaps even more but the marks of their origin are still unpleasantly plentiful. Every now and then they produce a political leader who puts their secret notions of the true good and the beautiful into plain words to the amazement and scandal of the rest of the country. That amazement is turned into downright incredulity when news comes that his platform has got him high office and that he is trying to execute it.

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nences in point. Once after I had published an article on some phase of the eternal race question a leading southern newspaper replied by printing a column of denunciation of my father then dead nearly twenty years—a philippic placarding him as an ignorant foreigner of dubious origin inhabiting "the Baltimore ghetto" and speaking a dialect recalling that of Weber & Fields—two thousand words of incandescent nonsense utterly false and beside the point but exactly meeting the latter-day southern notion of effective controversy. Another time I published a short discourse on lynching arguing that the sport was popular in the south because the backward culture of the region denied the populace more seemly recreations. Among such recreations I mentioned those afforded by brass bands, symphony orchestras, boxing matches, amateur athletic contests, shoot the chutes, roof gardens, horse races and so on. In reply another great southern journal denounced me as a man of wineshop temperament, brass jewelry tastes and pornographic predilections. In other words, brass bands in the south are classed with brass jewelry and both are snares of the devil! To advocate setting up symphony orchestras is pornography! Alas when the touchy southerner attempts a greater urbanity the result is often even worse. Some time ago a colleague of mine printed an article deploring the arrested cultural development of Georgia. In reply he received a number of protests from patriotic Georgians and all of them solemnly listed the glories of the state. I indulge in a few specimens.

Who has not heard of Aaa G Candler whose name is synonymous with Coca-Cola, a Georgia product?

The first Sunday school in the world was opened in Savannah.

Who does not recall with pleasure the writings of Frank L. Stanton, Georgia's brilliant poet?

Georgia was the first state to organize a Boys Corn Club in the South—Newton county 1904.

The first to suggest a common United Daughters of the Confederacy badge was Mrs. Raynes of Georgia.

The first to suggest a state historian of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was Mrs. C. Helen Plane (Macon convent on 1896).

The first to suggest putting to music Heber's "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" was Mrs. F. R. Goulding of Savannah.

And so on and so on. These proud boasts came, remember, not from obscure private persons but from leading Geor-



## RANDOLPH BOURNE

RANDOLPH SULLIMAN BOURNE (1886-1918) has had his misfortunes and his abilities sympathetically intimated in a brief usage in *The Happy P of xmon* the autobiography of Ellery Sedgwick eighth editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

Randolph Bourne was born in a sardonic hour. His body was ill-decent and misshapen. One felt within him all the agues and agonies of Caliban. He was a dwarf in stature without a redeeming feature. His shoulders were twisted and hunched, his face was a mouldy brow, and the skin drawn too tightly over the jaw made his teeth stand out like fangs. His mind was a beautiful instrument. Education had taught him to control it by the laws of irony. Bourne born in Bloomfield N. J. received his bachelor's degree in 1912 and his master's degree in 1913 from Columbia. The Gilder Fellowship permitted him a year of study in London and Paris. He became a member of the editorial staff of the *New Republic* for the four years between its birth and his death. He also became a contributing editor of the rejuvenated *Dial* and the newly founded *The Seven Arts*. Bourne found time and energy in his few years of writing to produce half a dozen books. James Oppenheim apostrophized him:

"The great hater  
Of the dark human deformity  
Which is our dying world,  
The great lover  
Of the spirit of youth  
Which is our future's seed

The accompanying selection is from the posthumously published (1909) *History of a Literary Radical*.

## This Older Generation

### I

I READ WITH ever increasing wonder the guarded defenses and discreet apologies for the older generation which keep filtering through the essays of the *Atlantic*. I can even seem to detect a growing decision of some definite assurance of conviction, which seems to imply that a rally has been undertaken



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Through so much of the current writing runs this quiet note of disapprobation. These aesthetic professors who unsettle the faith of our youth; these intellectuals who stick a finger in everybody's pie in the name of social justice; these sensation mongers who unveil great masses of political and social corruption; these remorseless scientists who would reveal so many of our reticences—why can't they let us alone? Can they not see that God's in his heaven, all's right with the world?

## II

Now I know this older generation which doth protest so much. I have lived with it for the last fifteen years ever since I began to wonder whether all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds. I was educated by it, grew up with it. I doubt if any generation ever had a more docile pupil than I. What they taught me I find they still believe, or at least so many of them as have not gone over to the enemy, or been captured by the militant youth of to-day. Or it seems rather likely they no longer precisely believe, but they want their own arguments to convince themselves. It is probable that when we really believe a thing with all our hearts, we do not attempt to justify it. Justification comes only when we are beginning to doubt it.

By this older generation I mean, of course, the mothers and fathers and uncles and aunts of the youth of both sexes between twenty and thirty who are beginning their professional or business life. And I refer of course to the comfortable or fairly comfortable American middle class. Now this older generation has had a religion, a metaphysics, an ethics, and a political and social philosophy which have reigned practically undisputed until the appearance of the present generation. It has at least never felt called upon to justify itself. It has never been directly challenged, as it is to-day. In order to localize this generation still further, we must see it in its typical setting of the small town or city, clustered about the institutions of church and family. If we have any society which can be called American, it is this society. Its psychology is American psychology, its soul is America's soul.

This older generation, which I have known so well for fifteen years, has a reputation which is on the whole as pleasant and easy as could be desired. Though its members are the descendants of the stern and rugged old Puritans who wrestled with the devil and stripped their world of all that might



stable hand from the ramparts of heaven or offer the kindly patronage to the less fortunate or—most dazzling of all—throw away in a frenzy of abandonment, life and fortune. Not to construct a business organization where dishonesty would be meaningless but to be utopianly honest against the business world. In other words the older generation believes in getting all the luxury of the virtue of goodness while consuming all the advantages of being in a vicious society.

If there is any one characteristic which distinguishes the older generation it is this belief that social ills may be cured by personal virtue. Its highest moral ideals are sacrifice and service. But the older generation can never see how intensely selfish these ideals are in the most complete sense of the word selfish. What they mean always is "I sacrifice myself for you I serve you not, "We cooperate in working ceaselessly toward an ideal where all may be free and none may be served or serve. These ideals of sacrifice and service are utterly selfish because they take account only of the satisfaction and moral consolidation of the doer. They enhance his moral value but what of the person who is served or sacrificed for? What of the person who is done good to? If the feelings of sacrifice and service were in any sense altruistic the moral enhancement of the receiver would be the object sought. But can it not be said that for every individual virtuous merit secured by an act of sacrifice or service on the part of the receiver? Do we not universally recognize this by calling a person who is not conscious of this depression a parasite and the person who is no longer capable of depression, a pauper? It is exactly those free gifts such as schools libraries, and so forth, which are impersonal or social that we can accept gratefully and gladly and it is exactly because the ministrations of a Charity Organization Society are impersonal and businesslike that they can be received willingly and without moral depression by the poor.

The ideal of duty is equally open to attack. The great complaint of the younger against the older generation has to do with the rigidity of social relationships into which the younger find themselves born. The world seems to be full of what may be called canalized emotions. One is supposed to love one's aunt or one's grandfather in a certain definite way at the risk of being "unnatural." One gets almost a sense of the quantitative measurement of emotion. Perhaps the greatest tragedy of family life is the useless energy that is expended by it.



the Christian scheme is a clever but unsuccessful attempt to cure the evils of inequality by transposing the values. The slave serves gladly instead of servilely. That is he turns his master into a slave. That is why good Christian people can never get over the idea that Socialism means simply the triumph of one class over another. Today the proletarian is down the capitalist up. To-morrow the proletarian will be up and the capitalist down. To pull down the mighty from their seats and exalt them of low degree is the highest pitch to which Christian ethics ever attained. The failure of the older generation to recognize a higher ethic the ethic of democracy is the cause of all the trouble.

The notorious Victorian era which in its secret heart this older generation still admires so much accentuated all the latent individualisms of Christian ethics and produced a code which, without the rebellion of the younger generation would have spiritually guaranteed forever all moral caste divisions and inequalities of modern society. The Protestant Church in which this exaggerated ethic was enshrined is now paying heavily the price of this debauch of ethical power. Its rapidly declining numbers show that human nature has an invincible objection to being individually saved. The Catholic Church which saves men as members of the Beloved Community and not as individuals flourishes. When one is saved by Catholicism one becomes a democrat and not a spiritual snob and aristocrat as one does through Calvinism. The older generation can never understand that superb loyalty which is loyalty to a community—a loyalty which paradoxical as it may seem nourishes the true social personality in proportion as the individual sense is lessened. The Protestant Church in its tenacious devotion to the personal ideal of a Divine Master—the highest and most popular Christian ideal of to-day—shows how very far it still is away from the ideals and ethics of a social democracy—a life lived in the Beloved Community.

The sense of self respect is the very keystone of the personality in whose defence all this individualistic philosophy has been carefully built up. The Christian virtues date from ages when there was a vastly greater number of morally depressed people than there is now. The tenacious survival of these virtues can be due only to the fact that they were valuable to the moral prestige of some class. Our older generation with its emphasis on duty sacrifice and service shows us very clearly what those interests were. I deliberately accuse the older generation of conserving and greatly strengthening these ideals

ful in keeping these artificial channels open and the correct amount of current running. It is exactly this that produces most infallibly the rebellion of the younger generation. To hear that one ought to love this or that person or to hear loyalty spoken of as the older generation so often speaks of it as if it consisted in an allegiance to something which one no longer believes in—this is what soonest liberates those forces of madness and revolt which bewilder spiritual teachers and guides. It is those dry channels of duty and obligation through which no living waters of emotion flow that it is the ideal of the younger generation to break up. They will have no network of emotional canals which are not brimming no duties which are not equally loves.

But when they are loves you have duty no longer meaning very much. Duty like sacrifice and service always implies a personal relation of individuals. You are always doing your duty to somebody or something. Always the taint of inequality comes in. You are morally superior to the person who has duty done to him. If that duty is not filled with good will and desire it is morally hateful or at very best a necessary evil—one of those compromises with the world which must be made in order to get through it at all. But duty without good will is a compromise with our present state of inequality and to raise duty to the level of a virtue is to consecrate that state of inequality forevermore.

### III

It is the same thing with service. The older generation has attempted an insidious compromise with the new social democracy by combining the words social and service. Under cover of the ideal of service it tries to appropriate to itself the glory of social work and succeeds in almost convincing itself and the world that its Christianity has always held the same ideal. The faithful are urged to extend their activities. The assumption is that by doing good to more individuals you are thereby becoming social. But to speak of "social democracy" which of course means a freely cooperating freely reciprocating society of equals and service together is a contradiction of terms. For when you serve people or do good to them you thereby render yourself unequal with them. You insult the democratic ideal. If the service is compulsory it is menial and you are inferior. If voluntary you are superior. The difference however is only academic. The en-

intellectuality as not individual enough. Intellectually the older generation seems to lead far too vegetative a life. It may be that this life has been lived on the heights, that these souls have passed through fires and glories, but there is generally too little objective evidence of this subjective fact. If the intuition which accompanies experience has verified all the data regarding God, the soul, the family, and so forth—to quote one of the staunchest defenders of the generation—this verification seems to have been obtained rather than the issues might be promptly disposed of and forgotten. Certainly the older generation is rarely interested in the profounder issues of life. It never speaks of death—the suggestion makes it uncomfortable. It shies in panic at hints of sex issues. It seems resolute to keep life on as objective a plane as possible. It is no longer curious about the motives and feelings of people. It seems singularly to lack the psychological sense. If it gossip it recounts actions, effects. It rarely seeks to interpret. It tends more and more to treat human beings as moving masses of matter instead of as personalities filled with potent influence, or as abnormally interesting social types, as I am sure the younger generation does.

The older generation seems no longer to generalize at all though it gives every evidence of having once prodigiously generalized for its world is all hardened and definite. There are the good and the criminal and the poor, the people who can be called nice and the ordinary people. The world is already plotted out. Now I am sure that the generalizations of the truly philosophical mind are very fluid and ephemeral. They are no sooner made than the mind sees their insufficiency and has to break them up. A new cutting is made, only in turn to be shaken and rearranged. This keeps the philosopher thinking all the time and it makes his world a very uncertain place. But he at least runs no risk of hardening and he has his eyes open to most experience.

I am often impressed with the fact that the older generation has grown weary of thinking. It has simply put up the bars in its intellectual shop windows and gone off home to rest. It may well be that this is because it has felt so much sorrow that it does not want to talk about sorrow, or so much love that it interprets love tries it, or repulsed so many rude blows of destiny that it has no interest in speaking of destiny. Its flame may be low for the very reason that it has burned so intensely. But how many of the younger generation would eagerly long for such interpretations if the older would only



as a defensive measure. Morals are always the product of a situation; they reflect a certain organization of human relations which some class or group wishes to preserve. A moral code or set of ideals is always the invisible spiritual sign of a visible social grace. In an effort to retain the *status quo* of that world of inequalities and conventions in which they most comfortably and prosperously live, the older generation has stamped through all its agencies of family, church, and school upon the younger generation just those seductive ideals which would preserve its position. These old virtues upon which, however, the younger generation is already making guerilla warfare, are simply the moral support with which the older generation buttresses its social situation.

The natural barriers and prejudices by which our elders are cut off from a freely flowing democracy are thus given a spiritual justification, and there is added for our elders the almost sensual luxury of leaping by free grace the barriers and giving themselves away. But the price has to be paid. Just as profits in the socialist philosophy are taken to be an abstraction from wages through the economic power which one class has over another, so the virtues of the older generation may be said to be an abstraction from the virtue of other classes less favorably situated from a moral or personal point of view. Their swollen self-respect is at the expense of others.

How well we know the type of man in the older generation who has been doing good all his life! How his personality has thriven on it! How he has ceaselessly been storing away moral fat in every cranny of his soul! His goodness has been meat to him. The need and depression of other people has been all unconsciously to him the air which he has breathed. Without their compensating misfortune or sin, his goodness would have wilted and died. If good people would earnestly set to work to make the world uniformly healthy, courageous, beautiful, and prosperous, the field of their vocation would be constantly limited and finally destroyed. That they so stoutly resist all philosophies and movements which have these ends primarily in view is convincing evidence of the fierce and jealous egoism which animates their so plausibly altruistic spirit. One suspects that the older generation does not want its vocation destroyed. It takes an heroic type of goodness to undermine all the foundations on which our virtue rests.

If then I object to the ethical philosophy of the older generation on the ground that it is too individualistic and under the pretense of altruism too egoistic, I object to its general

## HEYWOOD BROWN

HEYWOOD CAMPBELL BROWN (1888-1939) was born in Brooklyn. He attended Harvard four years but left without receiving a degree. He became a reporter and later a columnist in New York, working on various newspapers—the *Massachusetts Telegraph*, the *Tribune* and the *World*. During World War I he was sent to France as a correspondent with the A.E.F. He married (and divorced sixteen years later) Ruth Hale, well known feminist. Brown's journalistic progress was from reporter to sports writer to dramatic critic to columnist. In 1922 he became associated with the Scripps-Howard newspapers. For some years he wrote a column for *The Nation*. His books reflect these changes. *Sitting on the Night* (1921) and *Peep of Hell* (1922) include many of his criticisms of plays. *Sitting on the World* (1924) and *It Seems to Me* 1925-1935 (1935) are collections of columns of a general nature. Brown became increasingly interested in social maladjustments. His espousal of the cause of Sacco and Vanzetti led to a break with the *World*. In 1930 he was a Socialist candidate for Congress. He was instrumental in founding the American Newspaper Guild, and for the first four years was its president. Five years before his death he married Connie Madison, widow of vaudeville actor Johnny Dooley. They soon left New York for Stamford, Connecticut, where he devoted himself to the waning kind of personal journalism exemplified in his weekly publication, the *Connecticut Nutmeg*, later named *Brown Nutmeg*. Shortly before his death he was converted to membership in the Roman Catholic Church. A *Collected Edition* of his works, edited by his son, was published in 1941. The accompanying essay "A Study in Sportsmanship" appeared in *Harpur's Magazine* for June 1925.

## Dying for Dear Old—

A YOUNG MAN is being supported by two comrades as he limps across a field. It would not be stretching a point to call him a boy, as he is just past nineteen. His face is grimed and bloody and one foot drags behind him. He is crying. Not because of his injury, mind you, for this is a deeper hurt. A cause for which he has fought is going down in defeat. After the grave disaster of this afternoon his team has lost

reveal them! And how little plausible ■ that experience when it ■ occasionally interpreted! No enthusiasm passion for ideas sensuality religious fervor—all the heated weapon with which the younger generation attacks the world seem only to make the older generation uneasy The spirit in becoming reconciled to life has lost life itself

As I see the older generation going through its daily round of business church and family life I cannot help feeling that its influence ■ profoundly pernicious It has signally failed to broaden its institutions for the larger horizon of the time The church remains a private club of comfortable middle-class families while outside there grows up without spiritual inspiration a heterogeneous mass of people without ties roots or principles The town changes from a village to an industrial center and church and school go through their time honored and listless motions The world widens society expands formidable crises appear but the older generation does not broaden or if it does the broadening is in no adequate proportion to our needs The older generation still uses the old ideas for the new problem Whatever new wine it finds must be poured into the old bottles

Where are the leaders among the older generation in America who with luminous faith and intelligence are rallying around them the disintegrated numbers of idealistic youth as Bergson and Barres and Jaurès have done in France? A few years ago there seemed to be a promise of a forward movement toward Democracy led by embattled veterans in a war against privilege But how soon the older generation became wearied in the march! What is left now of that shining army and its leader? Must the younger generation eternally wait for the sign?

The answer is of course that it will not wait It must shoulder the gigantic task of putting into practice its ideals and revolutionary points of view as wholeheartedly and successfully as our great grandfathers applied theirs and tightened the philosophy of life which imprisons the older generation The shuddering fear that we in turn may become weary complacent evasive should be the best preventive of that stagnation We shall never have done looking for the miracle that it shall be given us to lighten cheer and purify our younger generation even as our older has depressed and disintegrated us

manently tender And if he succeeds brilliantly he may be no better off The American community is cluttered with ineffective young men who gave their souls to learn dropping and then found that there was no future in it

The football player is not permitted to take any big game casually Emotionalizing his men is accepted by the coach as a necessary part of his functions I was assigned to work on a big halfback a former football star at Harvard told me

He was a good defensive player but in the early games he didn't seem to show much fire He was a lonely sort of fellow and it took me some time to find a line to get going on We talked awhile and he told me that he came from Weston Massachusetts I said to him My brother lives in Weston and when you get in that game to-morrow I want you to play so that he and everybody else in Weston will be proud of you You don't want to disgrace my brother in Weston do you?

It was perfectly true that I did have a brother in Weston " my football friend continued and the angle I took worked all right In fact it worked a little too well After I'd been talking about Weston for quite a time this big halfback began to cry I couldn't get him to stop He was crying the next morning when we got out to the field and the doctor wouldn't let him attend the talk before the game The doctor had to walk him up and down the sidelines to get him quieted down Still he'd go in and play a whale of a game

I've always wanted to get an exact transcript of the parting words of a head coach to his men or his subsequent speech between the halves I do know one but it was delivered to the squad of a comparatively small college Just before the North Carolina eleven took the gridiron against Harvard their coach said to his players I want you boys to remember that every man on the Harvard team is a Republican

But in this case oratory failed The game was a conventional Republican landslide More effective was an address delivered to another Southern team which invaded the North On this occasion the coach relinquished his privilege of prodding the last words and called an old gentleman into the locker room And the voice of the veteran rang out like a trumpet call He spoke of the Civil War and of how the South had held the Yankees back for four years There was a line not to be split by any Yankee plunger And the sons of Rebs could do it gain The old man called on the excited youngsters to remember Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee They remembered and played gloriously but later there was hard

all claim to the football championship of Cambridge New Haven and Princeton N J

He is young you say and will soon get over the tragedy which has come upon him I am not so sure of that I remember the man who dropped the punt during my Freshman year at Harvard Everybody thought Yale would win easily but the crimson line was holding beyond all expectations The score was 0 to 0 and then this man came into the game The first play to follow was a pun by the Yale fullback This man had the ball squarely in his arms He dropped it Down flashed a Yale end and in six rushes the ball was carried over the line There was no further scoring Yale won

All this happened in November and in June there wandered about the yard an unhappy soul who was known to all his fellows as the man who dropped the punt He was a senior and it may be that graduation brought some release although it must have been hard for him to find a spot in the United States to which the news of his mishap had never carried Fate had been harsh to him but not unscrupulous exactly He did drop the punt The true protagonist of the tragedy was another He might have been spared for at the time his brother dropped the punt this one had not yet matriculated at Harvard That made no difference The tradition endured During his four years of college life he was known universally as the brother of the man who dropped the punt

And in all seriousness I advance the surmise that there are middle aged men in this country who have been a little embittered and shaken for thirty years because of the fact that in some critical football game they acquitted themselves badly The team on which they played was beaten

I don't think this is a fantastic assumption Unless he grows up to be President or defendant in an important murder trial the college football player is likely to receive far more extensive and searching newspaper publicity during his undergraduate days than at any other period of his life He is called upon to face an emotional crisis in his life and to be watched by seventy thousand as he faces it On the following day several million people will read of what he did The quarterback who calls for a plunge through center will be publicly denounced as dull witted if the play is piled up just short of the goal line To stumble in the spotlight never did anybody any good and if the man who fails happens to be nineteen years old he may get an ego bruise which will leave him per

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anything but the signals and to go through with our assignments. They did all the cursing and we won the game.

And if all this is well founded why is college football looked upon as the very flower and pattern of the highest sporting ideals in America? I don't know why I like to watch college football and I can get emotional about it but when I want moral stimulus and confirmation for my faith in the fundamental romanticism of man I go to see professional baseball. There have been scandals in the big leagues and even the most worthy and honest player is paid for his performances on the diamond. That doesn't matter. The distinction between the amateur and the professional cannot be reduced to a simple formula. In any field of endeavor your true and authentic amateur is a man who plays a game gleefully. I have never seen any college player who seemed to get half so much fun out of football as Babe Ruth derives from baseball. Ruth is able to contribute this gusto to his game spontaneously. Nobody makes him a set speech in the dressing room before he embarks to meet his test. The fans will not spell out N E W Y O R K with colored handkerchiefs to inspire him. There will be no songs about hitting the line. Indeed Ruth will not even be asked to die for the cause he represents.

Instead of running out at top speed Babe Ruth may be observed ambling quite slowly in the general direction of the diamond. He approaches a day's work. This thing before him is a job and it would not be fitting for him to run. But a little later you may chance to see a strange thing happen. The professional ball players take up their daily tasks. Soon in the cause of duty Ruth is called upon to move from right center all the way to the edge of the foul line. And now he is running. To the best of my knowledge and belief there is no current goddard hero who runs with the entire earnestness of Ruth. Once I saw him charge full tilt against the wall of the Yankee Stadium. It was a low wall and Ruth's body was so inextricably committed to forward motion that a wall was insufficient to quell the purpose inhering in the moving mass. And so his head and shoulders went over the barrier and after a time his feet followed. The resulting tumble must have been at least as vicious as any tackle ever visited upon a charging halfback. But for Ruth there was no possibility of time out. He could not ask so much as the indulgence of a sponge or a paper drinking cup. Shaking the disorders out of his spinning head he tumbled himself back over the wall again and threw a runner out at the plate.





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truly summons him in there any necessity of shouting. And so I find the emotion of a big league ball game far more genuine and deep rooted than at any college football encounter. All shade and sensitivity is sacrificed in football by the pernicious practice of regimentation. "A long cheer with three Harvards on the end" cries the man in the white sweater through his megaphone. It is entirely possible that in the prettiest moments he calls upon me and my fellows to declare ourselves there is stored up in none of us more than a short cheer. It may even be that we have no inclination to cheer at all. Still, the duty is heavy upon us and we must render lip-service.

Before the afternoon is done the vilest sort of hypocrisy will be forced upon us. When the team in blue comes out upon the gridiron we shall all be called upon to render them a long cheer and to add three Yales for courtesy. This is in violation of the deeper feelings of the human heart. We wish no success to Yale. At the mass meeting eloquent speakers have pointed out that it is imperative to the honor of Harvard that Yale shall be turned back from our gates. Already we have sung of our intention to smash bleach and ride them down. And here we are called upon to cheer them. It is all too distracting. Ambivalence is not a condition which one cares to celebrate at the top of his voice.

The psychology of baseball is much more simple and more honest. The Washington rooter makes no pretense of wishing the Giants well. He pays them the compliment of thorough going opposition. In the first game of the last World's Series two home runs were made by New York players. It was as if a lace handkerchief had been tossed into the Grand Canyon. This was an aggressive silence. A sincere horror and anguish struck forty thousand people into a muteness which fairly throbbed. They made no dishonest pretense of polite applause but maintained instead an honorable silence.

And yet your baseball player and your baseball fan never take defeat in any such tragic spirit as the football collegian. Finality is so long delayed. The game which is lost may be cancelled by victory on the succeeding day. And all this serves to create in the mind of the impressionable a picture of life more accurate than that which is conveyed by football. Defeat is a portion of every man born into the world. He must learn to accept it and if he is to amount to much in his community he must get from every check a certain stimulus to appeal from the decision. There is no use crying over spilt milk or



## WALTER LIPPMANN

WALTER LIPPMANN was born in New York in 1889. Graduated from Harvard in 1909, he immediately became an assistant to philosopher George Santayana. His first post-graduate work was as an estimator for Lincoln Steffens on *Everybody's Magazine*. A brief tenure as private secretary to the first Socialist mayor of Schenectady was followed by work on an English translation of Freud. At this time he wrote much of his first book, *A Preface to Politics* (1913). In 1914 he became an associate editor of the *New Republic* for a five-year period (with time out as assistant to Secretary of War Newton D. Baker working chiefly on peace negotiations). He then moved to the *New York Herald Tribune* becoming its chief editorial writer and in another five years its editor. He is now a special writer for the *New York Herald Tribune* and his frequent columns are syndicated in newspapers throughout the country. He has received honorary degrees in law and in letters from more than a dozen colleges and universities. Foreign honors have included from France the Legion of Honor from Belgium the Order of Leopold from Norway the Order of St. Olaf and from the Netherlands the Order of Orange Nassau. For six years he was a member of the Harvard Board of Overseers for another half-dozen years he was a Senator of Phi Beta Kappa. He is a frequent contributor to magazines and in thirty years has published more than a score of books. Among them are *Drift and Mastery* (1914) *The Stake of Diplomacy* (1915) *Public Opinion* (1922) *The Phantom Public* (1925) *Men of Letters* (1927) *American Inquiry* (1928) *A Preface to Morality* (1929) *The Good Society* (1937) *U.S.F. Foreign Policy Should Finish Republic* (1943) a supplementary book *U.S. War Aims* (1944) and *The Public Philosophy* (1955). The final collection was published in the May 1954 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

## The Shortage in Education

### I

WHAT I AM going to say is the result of a prolonged exposure to the continuing crisis of our western society—to the crisis of the democratic governments and of free institutions during the wars and revolutions of the twentieth century. Now it does









deceiving ourselves seriously. We cannot measure the demands upon our people in the second half of the twentieth century—the demands in terms of trained intelligence, moral discipline, knowledge, and not least the wisdom of great affairs—by what was demanded of them at the beginning of the first half of this century. The burden of living in America today and of governing America today is very much heavier than it was fifty years ago, and the crucial question is whether the increase of our effort in education is keeping up with the increase in the burden.

When we use this standard of comparison we must find, I submit, that the increase in our effort to educate ourselves is of a quite different—and of a very much smaller—order of magnitude than is the increase in what is demanded of us in this divided and dangerous world. Our educational effort and our educational needs are not now anywhere nearly in balance. The supply is not nearly keeping up with the demand. The burden of the task is very much heavier than is the strength of the effort. There is a very serious and dangerous deficit between the output of education and our private and public need to be educated.

How can we measure this discrepancy? I am sorry to say that I shall have to use a few figures, trusting that none of you will think that when I use them I am implying that all things can be measured in dollars and cents. I am using the figures because there is no other way to illustrate concretely the difference in the two orders of magnitude—the difference between what we do to educate ourselves on the one hand, and on the other hand, what the kind of world we live in demands of us.

What shall we use as a measure of our educational effort? For the purpose of the comparison I think we may take the total expenditure per capita, first in 1900 and then about half a century later, in 1953, on public and private schools from kindergarten through college.

And as a measure of the burden of our task—of the responsibilities and of the commitments to which education has now to be addressed—we might take Federal expenditures per capita, first in 1900 and then in our time, half a century later.

We differ among ourselves of course as to whether we are spending too much, too little, or the right amount on defense and on the public services. But these differences do not seriously affect the argument. For all of us, or nearly all of us, are agreed on the general size and the scope of the necessary



momentous change in the structure of American society and it has added greatly to the burden upon the schools.

The responsibility of the schools for educating the new generation has become very much more comprehensive than it used to be. Ever so much more is now demanded of the schools. For they are expected to perform many of the educational functions which used to be performed by the family, the settled community, the church, the family business, the family farm, the family trade.

This is a very big subject in itself—much too big for me here—except to mention it as a reminder that the comparison between our real educational effort and our real public need is less favorable than the figures of one to two in 1900 as against one to six today. For the school today has a much larger role to play in the whole process of education than it needed to play in the older American society.

Can it be denied that the educational effort is inadequate? I think it cannot be denied. I do not mean that we are doing a little too little. I mean that we are doing much too little. We are entering upon an era which will test to the utmost the capacity of our democracy to cope with the gravest problem of modern times and on a scale never yet attempted in all the history of the world. We are entering upon this difficult and dangerous period with what I believe we must call a growing deficit in the quantity and the quality of American education.

There is compelling proof that we are operating at an educational deficit. It is to be found in many of the controversies within the educational system. I am not myself of course a professional educator. But I do some reading about education and I have been especially interested in the problem of providing education for the men and women who must perform the highest functions in our society—the elucidation and the articulation of its ideals, the advancement of knowledge, the making of high policy in the government and the leadership of the people.

How are we discussing this problem? Are we, as we ought to be doing, studying what are the subjects and what are the disciplines which are needed for the education of the gifted children for the leadership of the nation? That is not the main thing we are discussing. We are discussing whether we can afford to educate our leaders when we have so far to go before we have done what we should do to provide equal opportunities for all people.

tasks of the modern Federal government both in military defense and for civilian purposes. Between the highest and the lowest proposals of responsible and informed men I doubt that the difference is as much as 20 per cent. That is not a great enough difference to affect the point I am making. That point is that the size of the public expenditure reflects—roughly of course but nevertheless fundamentally—the scale and scope of what we are impelled and compelled to do. It registers our judgment on the problems which we must cope with.

Now in 1900 the educational effort measured in expenditures per capita was \$3.40. The task, as measured by Federal expenditure per capita, was \$6.85. What we must be interested in is I submit the ratio between these two figures. We find then that in 1900 the nation put out \$1 of educational effort against \$2 of public task.

How is it now half a century or so later? In 1953 the educational effort was at the rate of about \$76 per capita. Federal expenditures including defense had risen to \$467 per capita. The ratio of educational effort to public task, which in 1900 was one to two, had fallen a half century later to a ratio of one to six.

Perhaps I should pause at this point for a parenthesis to say for those who may be thinking how much the value of the dollar has depreciated since 1900 that I am aware of that but for the purposes of this comparison it makes no difference. For while the dollar was worth probably three times as much in 1900 as in 1953 we are interested only in the relative effort in 1900 and 1953. The ratio would be the same if we divided the 1953 expenditures by three or if we multiplied the 1900 expenditures by three.

You have now heard all the statistics I shall use. The two ratios—the one at the beginning of our rise to the position of the leading great power of the world and the other the ratio a half century later when we carry the enormous burden abroad and at home—these two ratios show that the effort we are now making to educate ourselves has fallen in relation to our needs.

### III

I must now remind you that this disparity between the educational effort and the public task is in fact greater than the figures suggest. For in this half century there has been a

momentous change in the structure of American society and it has added greatly to the burden upon the schools

The responsibility of the schools for educating the new generation has become very much more comprehensive than it used to be. Ever so much more is now demanded of the schools. For they are expected to perform many of the educational functions which used to be performed by the family, the settled community, the church, the family business, the family farm, the family trade.

This is a very big subject in itself—much too big for me here—except to mention it as a reminder that the comparison between our real educational effort and our real public need is less favorable than the figures of one to two in 1900—against one to six today. For the school today has a much larger role to play in the whole process of education than it needed to play in the older American society.

Can it be denied that the educational effort is inadequate? I think it cannot be denied. I do not mean that we are doing a little too little. I mean that we are doing much too little. We are entering upon an era which will test to the utmost the capacity of our democracy to cope with the gravest problem of modern times and on a scale never yet attempted in all the history of the world. We are entering upon this difficult and dangerous period with what I believe we must call a growing deficit in the quantity and the quality of American education.

There is compelling proof that we are operating at an educational deficit. It is to be found in many of the controversies within the educational system. I am not myself of course a professional educator. But I do some reading about education and I have been especially interested in the problem of providing education for the men and women who must perform the highest functions in our society—the elucidation and the articulation of its ideals, the advancement of knowledge, the making of high policy in the government and the leadership of the people.

How are we discussing this problem? Are we, as we ought to be doing, studying what are the subjects and what are the disciplines which are needed for the education of the gifted children for the leadership of the nation? That is not the main thing we are discussing. We are discussing whether we can afford to educate our leaders when we have so far to go before we have done what we should do to provide equal opportunities for all people.

tasks of the modern Federal government both in military defense and for civilian purposes. Between the highest and the lowest proposals of responsible and informed men I doubt that the difference is as much as 20 per cent. That is not a great enough difference to affect the point I am making. That point is that the size of the public expenditure reflects—roughly of course but nevertheless fundamentally—the scale and scope of what we are impelled and compelled to do. It registers our judgment on the problems which we must cope with.

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### III

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learned that we are quite rich enough to defend ourselves whatever the cost. We must now learn that we are quite rich enough to educate ourselves as we need to be educated.

There is an enormous margin of luxury in this country against which we can draw for our vital needs. We take that for granted when we think of the national defense. From the tragedies and the bitter experience of being involved in wars for which we were inadequately prepared, we have acquired the will to defend ourselves. And having done that, having acquired the will, we have found the way. We know how to find the dollars that are needed to defend ourselves, even if we must do without something else that is less vitally important.

In education we have not yet acquired that kind of will. But we need to acquire it, and we have no time to lose. We must acquire it in this decade. For if in the crucial years which are coming our people remain as unprepared as they are for their responsibilities and their mission, they may not be equal to the challenge, and if they do not succeed, they may never have a second chance to try.



Most of the argument—indeed the whole issue—of whether to address the effort in education to the average of ability or to the higher capacities derives from the assumption that we have to make that choice. But why do we have to choose? Why are we not planning to educate everybody as much as everybody can be educated some much more and some less than others?

This alleged choice is forced upon us only because our whole educational effort is too small. If we were not operating at a deficit level our working ideal would be the fullest opportunity for all—each child according to its capacity. It is the deficit in our educational effort which compels us to deny the children fitted for leadership of the nation the opportunity to become educated for that task.

So we have come to the point where we must lift ourselves as promptly as we can to a new and much higher level of interest of attention of hard work of care of concern of expenditure and of dedication to the education of the American people.

We have to do in the educational system something very like what we have done in the military establishment during the past fifteen years. We have to make a breakthrough to a radically higher and broader conception of what is needed and of what can be done. Our educational effort today what we think we can afford what we think we can do how we feel entitled to treat our schools and our teachers—all of that—is still approximately the same position as was the military effort of this country before Pearl Harbor.

In 1940 our armed forces were still at a level designed for a policy of isolation in this hemisphere and of neutrality in any war across the two oceans. Today the military establishment has been raised to a different and higher plateau and the effort that goes into it is enormously greater than it was in 1940.

Our educational effort on the other hand has not yet been raised to the plateau of the age we live in. I am not saying of course that we should spend 40 billions on education because we spend that much on defense. I am saying that we must make the same order of radical change in our attitude as we have made in our attitude towards defense. We must measure our educational effort as we do our military effort. That is to say we must measure it not by what it would be easy and convenient to do but by what it is necessary to do in order that the nation may survive and flourish. We have

never came into contact with him as a man knew him only as a politician and a statesman yet in 1924 Wilson as a politician had been dead for years and as for Wilson the statesman he was not dead yet. So what does it signify that they deposited a worn-out body in St. Alban's Cathedral in Washington almost exactly twenty years ago?

There is a terrific jest in connection with the career of Woodrow Wilson. He was repudiated by the American people.

For a long time nobody saw anything coming in that and this imperviousness is of course the cream of the jest. For fourteen years in fact the American people solemnly accepted it as a fact much to their credit that they had repudiated Woodrow Wilson; they so accepted it from 1919 to 1933. But when Hindenburg appointed a certain Adolf Hitler as Chancellor of the German Reich the more perceptive Americans began to sense vaguely a discrepancy somewhere and for the next six years this uneasiness increased. But perhaps not until December 7, 1941 did the majority of Americans realize that in repudiating Woodrow Wilson they had paralleled the feat of that Mid-Western Legislature which in the mid twenties adopted a resolution to the effect that thereafter in that State pi should represent 3 and not 3.1415 plus. We repudiated Woodrow Wilson—say rather that we repudiated Deasay we repudiated Fact, we repudiated Reality. There is the point of the joke.

Put it that in 1919 the American people said: "You must stop it!" to Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, the three Fates. We said it seriously, curtly and turned our backs; nor did we guess for fourteen years that we had left Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos grinning from ear to ear.

It is not a fortunate nation that the Weird Sisters hold in derision. The jokes that they play are grim jests indeed. Wilson knew it. In 1924 just before his death he wrote to Philip Kerr: "The great tragedy of the last six years is the fact that American failure to accept world responsibility means that the job will have to be done over again within twenty years or at ten times the cost. He over-estimated the time it was seventeen years later, not twenty, that the thunderbolt fell, as he had said it would. But he underestimated the effect it has exacted more than ten times the cost of the war of 1917-18."

There is a strange implacability tinging the whole story of Wilson exemplified best, perhaps by the way in which he has come back to life. It was none of our doing. As a nation



fore but not for a long time John C Calhoun and Andrew Jackson both resembled him in body and in temperament but the Calhoun Jackson type had not figured prominently in American politics for many years and in Wilson's time a majority of Americans knew nothing of it

A cursory examination of his origin his early environment and his career is enough to explain why he was bound to confuse and bewilder a great many of his fellow-citizens He was of Scotch Irish ancestry he came from the South he was a stout Presbyterian Each of these facts is significant and each helped to puzzle the country each contributed and was bound to contribute to its misconception of the man.

Woodrow Wilson was a Scotch Irishman A hundred years ago the country understood better than it does today what that statement implies for a hundred years ago the country was much more thoroughly British than it is today The Scotch Irishman is something of an enigma even to the unhyphenated Scot to the Englishman and to the Welshman but they all understood him better than the rest of the world including the Celtic Irish Jackson and Calhoun puzzled somewhat a country still predominantly British but not as much as Wilson puzzled a country that for a century had been growing more and more non British in blood and in ways of thinking

Wilson was a Calvinist in a country at least twenty five per cent Catholic Lutheran and Jewish and probably forty per cent skeptic The Calvinist too has always been difficult for men of other religions to understand but the proportion of Calvinists in America a century ago was higher than it is now and therefore the popular ability to understand them was greater

Wilson was a Southerner by birth and breeding although he made his career in the North The Southerner certainly from 1865 to 1900 was a man compelled to deal with economic social and political problems of a highly specialized kind His experience differed in important respects from that of the citizen of any other region so inevitably his attitudes differed As a result he puzzled other Americans New Englander and Californian may not have understood each other thoroughly in those years but they did not differ from each other on nearly as many points as those on which the Southerner differed from them both

The Scot in his native country has never had the reputation of being a soft man physically or morally but the Scotch Irishman is a Scot whose forebears for three hundred years

we were perfectly willing to leave him forever in the realm of gloomy Dis. Countless literary undertakers assisted by embalming him in a small library of volumes biographies laudatory and comminatory histories memoirs essays studies of all degrees of competence and incompetence philosophical dissertations text books. But it is perhaps significant that there is no first rate novel play or poem about Woodrow Wilson. When scholars write up a man voluminously he may be pronounced as a rule very thoroughly dead. Not science or philosophy but art alone can bring a man of the past back to life. Scholars never revive such a man and in the case of Wilson it must be said with all due respect to Mr Ray Stannard Baker and the rest, that they haven't even made him look natural.

The artists however haven't touched him—or certainly not successfully. Perhaps this is accident but perhaps it is due to the artists' perception whether clear or only half apprehended that there is an artistic imbalance in the story an asymmetry as if a segment were missing. Certainly a segment is being added to the story of Woodrow Wilson now for the gaunt old Presbyterian is alive again is dominant again in all men's hearts and minds.

It was none of our doing. It was the relentless march of events the operation of cold logic of stern reality of pitiless truth that called this gray ghost from the cathedral crypt. What he said would happen has happened. The thunder of the guns in Poland drowned the scornful laughter with which we received his prophecy and appalled we realized that what we took for stones with which to stone his dream to death were in reality dragon's teeth.

And yet no fair minded man looking back upon it now can fail to see that we were in some measure trapped. We were—and are—to a greater extent than we like to admit, a soft minded romantic people fed upon fairy stories and this man flung Holy Writ in our faces. The New Economic Era two cars in every garage the permanent abolition of poverty—these we could believe coming from a great engineer and a shrewd Vermont Yankee so naturally when a college professor intoned, 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap' we recognized him as an impractical idealist and if the high gods roared with mirth yet it was a natural assumption. For Woodrow Wilson came in strange trappings. In body and in mind he was old fashioned. In an earlier day we might have placed him more easily for we had seen men of his type

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tenan college in the South. The experiment was not a success. Young Wilson's health suffered under the strain of college work and he dropped out after a year. In the meantime his father had returned to the active ministry taking a church at Wilmington, North Carolina.

A year at home restored the young man physically at least far enough to enable him to undertake undergraduate collegiate work again. This time he entered his father's *Alma Mater* Princeton where he was graduated with the Class of 1879.

He then took a law course at the University of Virginia and entered practice in Atlanta, Georgia. This experiment too was not a success and from its failure all sorts of psychological deductions have been drawn by men who assume that Woodrow Wilson really wanted to be a lawyer. The truth is that at the time and for a good many years afterward for a young college graduate to study law proved only that he did not like either medicine or theology. Business was not a career. This is hard to understand sixty years later and it was quite impossible to understand in, say New York in 1880 but it is the literal truth. In 1880 the South was feeling the first faint stirrings of the industrialism that was to absorb its energies and many of its best brains for the next half-century but the movement had not yet gotten really under way. Business meant commerce and commerce demanded the mental and temperamental endowment of the trader. While there is nothing intrinsically disreputable about trading as a career it does require talents of a narrowly specialized type. The broader ability of the organizer and administrator was not in demand in the business world of the South in 1880 so young men who felt in themselves the capacity for leadership turned to the professions which meant the church, medicine and law. It was generally recognized that a special aptitude was requisite to success in either divinity or medicine but not in law so a young man at a loss for anything else to do turned that way.

The result was that some oddly assorted characters were admitted to the bar in the Southern States. Sidney Lanier studied law. So did Josephus Daniels. So did Thomas Nelson Page. The fact that Woodrow Wilson became a lawyer is illuminating as to the narrowness of opportunity in the South at that time rather than as to the mental traits of the man.

In any event his career at the bar was of the briefest. After a year he abandoned it and betook himself to the Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore which under the presidency of





its early days might easily have made him so. As it was, this experience undoubtedly reinforced heavily a trait already present.

A few years teaching at Bryn Mawr and at Wesleyan preceded his appointment to the history faculty of Princeton University in 1890. The brilliance of his record there is attested by the fact that within a dozen years he had risen to the presidency of the university. But Princeton was not another Johns Hopkins, the basic difference being that it was very old, and in the course of many generations had accumulated accretions of sentiment and tradition that had hardened into the consistency of ancient concrete. It is obvious as regards many of them that their basis was custom, not reason; some of them, no doubt, represented a regrettable slackness in the mental discipline of the institution, but it is by no means certain that their removal was as imperatively and urgently necessary as it seemed to Woodrow Wilson. In any event, there were those who liked the old ways, and they were obstinately defended. In the main, Wilson was right, and the reforms he effected at Princeton were numerous and salutary, but he effected them only at cost of a fight that rent the university so badly as to counteract much of the good he accomplished.

By the year 1910 the war had a stalemate. Wilson had won a number of battles, but his enemies had won on the important point of the location of a new Graduate School, and all hands were thoroughly sick of the incessant fighting. Then in stepped the Democratic boss of New Jersey, Senator James Smith, better known to fame as "Sugar Jim," with a singular idea. Somehow he acquired the notion that Wilson would make a good organization Governor of New Jersey. What possessed Sugar Jim to betray him into such an error, no one can say, for there was nothing whatever in the man's record to support it. Possibly the boss was convinced by the brilliant, but erratic George Harvey, editor of *Harper's Weekly*, and ablest of the press representatives of the great financial and industrial interests. It was an almost fabulously bad choice on Harvey's part, too, but his judgment of men was never conspicuously reliable.

Whatever the reason, these two Warwicks proceeded to make the fighting president of Princeton the Governor of New Jersey, and he promptly became a fighting Governor. He proceeded to ram through the Legislature a program of laws curbing the power of the great corporations and acutely distressing the Democratic machine. Sugar Jim, by the way, took



decided was reasonable and right and from that moment he was completely uncompromising on that point. He desired a treaty based on reason and right at the end of the conflict but he was prepared to accept and unhappily did accept a questionable treaty provided he secured the erection of machinery by which subsequent international disputes might be settled juridically rather than by violence. On this he would not yield either jot or tittle.

So much for Wilson. But what sort of country was he leading into this campaign? It was a pretty slack and slipshod country—certainly not a country given to scientific precision in its thinking, certainly not a country with much of the statist's uncompromising devotion to pursuit of the truth regardless of human emotions and human frailties. The country was filled with wrath against Germany and it wanted to see Germany whipped. That was the sole and simple basis of its war making. The country for the most part had no objection to the creation of an improved world order if that might be accomplished after the defeat of Germany but with the country the creation of the new order was incidental to victory whereas with Wilson victory was incidental to the creation of the new order.

What this dichotomy meant in the history of the world we are only now beginning to comprehend. A League of Nations backed by the full moral and military power of the United States, Wilson's solution might not have worked. We do not know. The mere beating of Germany, the solution the people preferred and imposed, did not work. That we do know because the fact is written in fire and blood across the map of the world today. Perhaps we rejected a solution that would not work, but certainly we accepted one that would not work.

Countless writers in innumerable books have pointed out when and where and how Wilson failed but it is all empty gabble. Wilson failed before he started. Wilson failed because in the very nature of things he was doomed to failure. Many things he might have done differently, some no doubt he might have done more wisely but the result would not have been altered. He would have failed because no matter how he altered himself he could not alter the country he was leading, and his country was not equal to the burden he imposed upon it. At the same time being the man he was he had to impose that burden. Being Wilson he could not do otherwise. He was a tragedy in the Grecian style, the hopeless contest of a strong man against implacable destiny.

it with curious mildness probably he felt he had asked for it, when he made that man Governor and was sportsman enough to accept the consequences of his own mistake. But the uproar in New Jersey delighted the country which was disgusted with the reactionary trend of the Taft administration at Washington especially did it delight William Jennings Bryan himself a connoisseur of eloquent polemic in which Wilson was a past master. So in 1912 Bryan flung all his great influence to Wilson who was nominated at the Baltimore convention and won an easy victory over an opposition split between Taft and Theodore Roosevelt.

There is no doubt whatever that Woodrow Wilson was a great social philosopher. There is no doubt that he understood the basic structure of our government its skeletal framework as well as any man of his time and far better than most men in public life. Conclusive evidence of this may be found in the program of legislation of the first half of his first administration. Formerly and openly he avowed the fact that party leadership is a necessary function of the Presidency—a fact accepted and acted upon by every strong President but openly proclaimed by none before his time. Within those first two years he pushed through Congress an amazing number of radical alterations in our political social and economic systems and the proof that they were not mere changes but genuine reforms is the fact that once embodied in the law they have never been removed.

In the restricted field of American government, whose structure he thoroughly understood he was superb. He accomplished an astonishing amount and speculation cannot fix bounds to what more he might have done had he been permitted to continue his work in that field.

But the war that began in 1914 shattered all his plans and compelled him to reconstruct them. In the beginning he seems to have shared the delusion common to most Americans that the conflict might be localized and restrained to the continent of Europe. Pursuit of this illusion led him repeatedly into blunders that rose up to plague him later but once he realized that the sheer size and weight of the United States must make it a participant in any war of world wide proportions he set himself to the same austere and uncompromising analysis of this problem that he was accustomed to make of any other.

He was not long in reaching the conclusion that participation in the war was justifiable only if it led to the creation of safeguards against a repetition of the disaster. Thus he

chance that the machinery might have been used had the League been endowed with the power to move it but the power to operate judicial machinery is only to a small extent police power. Mainly it is the moral power possessed by a disinterested judge and the only nation possessed of that power was the United States which rejected the League. Naturally from that moment it never had a chance.

Not a few of Wilson's supporters clung for years, and some still cling to the dismal theory that the League of Nations was destroyed out of partisan jealousy and spite. Wilson's ill advised appeal for a Democratic Congress in 1918 with the war still raging undoubtedly had done much to strengthen and envenom party spirit which had, indeed never been completely damped, even by the exigencies of war and the upsurge of that spirit provoked by the 1918 appeal played its part in 1919. Probably there were those who had nothing else in mind. In view of the subsequent activities that landed him in the penitentiary it is not difficult to believe that such a Republican as Albert B. Fall may have been animated in the League of Nations fight more by the desire to win office for the Republicans than by anything else. However the supposition that the hopes of all mankind were dashed to the ground to the sole end that Harding might be President and Fall Secretary of the Interior is an irony so terrific that imagination boggles at it. Nor do the facts support it. The remarkable feature of that controversy is not how many small men were moved by partisanship but how many first rate men rose above it. William H. Taft and Elihu Root come to mind at once and there were many other Republicans who fought valiantly in support of the idea of a Democratic President.

No the League of Nations was rejected not by the Republican party but by the American people and they rejected it because in their judgement the case for it had not been proved. The rejection has frequently been described as the revolt of an exhausted people sick of war but the American people were neither exhausted nor really sick of war. They had lost 50 000 men killed in battle and another 75 000 dead of disease or accident—a mere flea bite by comparison with Germany's 1 800 000 dead Russia's 1 700 000 France's 1 400 000 Austria's 1 200 000 Great Britain's 900 000 or even Italy's 650 000. But if our losses in blood were small we actually gained in treasure. The Bureau of the Census estimates the national wealth of the United States at 186 billions in 1912 and 320 billions in 1922. Deduct, if you will, an increase of 22 billions

After the lapse of more than twenty years it is easy to see the hopelessness of expecting a nation such as the United States of America was in 1919 to comprehend such a concept as that of the League of Nations. It was an unbeaten country, a happy country, an optimistic country, and the League of Nations was the fruit of wisdom born of defeat, suffering and disillusionment. With our customary joyous facility in getting the cart before the horse, most of us looked upon the League as impractically idealistic. What was wildly impractical of course was the idealistic assumption that in the crowded world of the twentieth century the nations could live happily and safely together without any provision for restraint of one that might go mad. The League of Nations was the grimly realistic acceptance of an unpleasant fact, but America was too little scarred, too little tested, too full of ebullient self confidence and adolescent scorn of all others to accept realism or even to recognize it.

To this day an astonishing number of Americans are incredulous when they are reminded that the Covenant of the League of Nations as it was originally drawn included machinery for the rectification of any errors that might be discovered in the Treaty of Versailles. Under that Covenant, Germany might have attained through processes resembling a suit at law rather than war, the correction of whatever impositions she could prove to be plainly unjust.

It is possible that Germany never was in the mood to seek rectification of injustice by peaceful means. It is possible that the hurt to her pride inflicted by the war of 1914-18 was more painful than the terms of the treaty, and a hurt to pride is not easily salved by a law suit. It is possible in short that she would have gone to war in any case.

But it is equally possible that the Germans are not or were not twenty years ago implacable enemies of the human race but merely a defeated people suffering under a peace treaty that they regarded as unjust, and sincerely believing that there was no way of securing justice except by force of arms. If it had been known to them that there was a possibility of securing substantial justice through legal process, and almost a certainty that an appeal to arms would fail, the blandishments of Hitler and his fellow fanatics might have fallen on deaf ears, and the tragedy of 1939 might not have occurred.

Of course this is not certain, but there was a chance that it might have happened. The machinery for correcting the mistakes of Versailles was erected in the Covenant; there is a

performing prodigies in raising equipping and transporting a gigantic army and that army once assembled on French soil, had swept to swift and easy victory. Mentally of course we were aware that we owed the ease of our victory to the fact that the enemy was three fourths beaten before we struck him but emotionally we did not feel thus at all. Emotionally all that registered was the fact that America was still the ever victorious and emotion was more powerful than reason.

But what irony can surpass the implication that prosperity security and happiness led America to reject the only feasible plan to insure the permanence of her prosperity security and happiness?

For emphasis I repeat that no one knows the plan would have been successful. But three things we do know (a) that it was a plan, (b) that it was the only plan presented and (c) that without any plan our prosperity security and happiness were within twenty four years in more deadly peril than they were in 1917. It is hard to imagine any circumstances under which participation in the League of Nations could have brought us to a worse pass than that to which non participation brought us by 1941.

Without doubt, it is a cosmic jest, the irony of ironies this spectacle of a great nation regarding itself as too threatened to deal with any warlock and proving it by striking hands with the Devil himself. Afraid of a new order created by Wilson, we intrusted its making to Hitler! It is a great jest and a grisly jest, but it is hardly on Wilson.

However it is the spirit of Wilson not Wilson in the flesh and errant flesh that Hitler has called from the tomb. The twenty-eighth President has suffered in reputation from the myopic adulation of friends who have thought it treason to admit any fault or flaw in him. Wilson was a faulty leader because he was afflicted with the typical ignorance of the scholar; he knew books better than men but that was only a part of it. It is probable that he also adopted perhaps subconsciously the heresy that it is virtuous to divorce reason from emotion. Certainly many scholars notably scholars of imperial Germany fell into this error as a natural reaction against the extreme romanticism that had well nigh divorced emotion from reason. But the German attitude is a heresy because it repudiates the cardinal doctrine of the scientific faith it pretends to serve. This cardinal doctrine is that the truth must be accepted, no matter how unpleasant the form



in the national debt in the same period and still we emerge with an increase of 112 billions in the decade that included the war

The League of Nations was rejected, not by an exhausted and disillusioned nation but by one intoxicated with success and cherishing the dangerous illusion that its own unaided strength was and would ever remain sufficient for its needs. The enemies of the League who were really effective were not the bitter partisans but the men who honestly believed that the disputed Article X pledging the military strength of the United States to the support of world peace was in fact, a unilateral guarantee. Blandly and blindly they assumed that Europe would always need American strength but that the time would never come when America would need European strength. A majority of the people shared this belief and clung to it for twenty years clung to it until the very hour when a tremendous combination of tyrannies seemed on the point of wiping out the last strongholds of free government.

That is the irony fit to evoke the jeering laughter of the Fates an irony so tremendous that by comparison with it all the other ironies in our national history pale into insignificance. If the American people could not believe twenty years ago in the necessity of arranging for the protection of the peace and security of all nations by some form of agreement backed by sufficient force to make it binding why could they not believe? The only possible answer is because their experience had led them to a different conclusion. Their experience for more than a hundred years had been that of tranquillity undisturbed by any really serious threat from without. The momentary flutter created by Andrew Jackson's thundering denunciation of the French king in 1833 had come to nothing and had been long forgotten. The affair of Maximilian in Mexico had been settled satisfactorily without any military exertion. Cleveland's sudden assault upon a startled British court in the matter of Venezuela had produced no more than a momentary tension and the brush with Spain in 1898 had resulted not in increased nervousness but in increased confidence. The only hostile commander in more than a century that this country had had cause to regard with uneasy respect was Lee the native son and the Confederacy was completely and permanently dead.

Even the war with Germany had been more sound and fury than stern fighting. It had taught us that we were capable of

performing prodigies in raising equipping and transporting a gigantic army and that army once assembled on French soil had swept to swift and easy victory. Mentally of course we were aware that we owed the ease of our victory to the fact that the enemy was three fourths beaten before we struck him but emotionally we did not feel this at all. Emotionally all that registered was the fact that America was still the ever victorious and emotion was more powerful than reason.

But what irony can surpass the implication that prosperity security and happiness led America to reject the only feasible plan to insure the permanence of her prosperity security and happiness?

For emphasis I repeat that no one knows the plan would have been successful. But three things we do know (a) that it was a plan, (b) that it was the only plan presented and (c) that without any plan our prosperity security and happiness were within twenty four years in more deadly peril than they were in 1917. It is hard to imagine any circumstances under which participation in the League of Nations could have brought us to a worse pass than that to which non participation brought us by 1941.

Without doubt it is a cosmic jest, the irony of ironies this spectacle of a great nation regarding itself as too shrewd to deal with any warlock and proving it by striking hands with the Devil himself. Afraid of a new order created by Wilson we entrusted its making to Hitler! It is a great jest and a grisly jest, but it is hardly on Wilson.

However it is the spirit of Wilson not Wilson in the frail and errant flesh that Hitler has called from the tomb. The twenty-eighth President has suffered in reputation from the injudicious adulation of friends who have thought it treason to admit any fault or flaw in him. Wilson was a faulty leader because he was afflicted with the typical ignorance of the scholarly he knew books better than men but that was only a part of it it is probable that he also adopted perhaps subconsciously the heresy that it is virtuous to divorce reason from emotion. Certainly many scholars notably scholars of imperial Germany fell into this error as a natural reaction against the extreme romanticism that had well nigh divorced emotion from reason. But the German attitude is a heresy because it repudiates the cardinal doctrine of the scientific faith it pretends to serve. This cardinal doctrine is that the truth must be accepted, no matter how unpleasant the form

in the national debt in the same period and still we emerge with an increase of 112 billions in the decade that included the war

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is indissolubly linked with the safety of all free peoples and that ours cannot be assured without assuring that of others? One greater than Wilson said, long before 1917 none of us liveth in himself and no man dieth in himself. It became ever more plain that in the crowded modern world this is as true of nations as it is of individual men.

President Roosevelt was criticized for going too far when he said, "Our frontier is on the Rhine" but his real error was one of understatement. Our frontier is farther away than the Rhine. Our frontier is at the utmost limit of human freedom. Wherever a man is enslaved by violence—a yellow Manchurian, a swarthy Spaniard, an ebony Ethiopian as well as a blond Norwegian—our frontier is invaded. It does not follow of course that we should fly to arms to avenge every border incident but we should recognize these incidents for what they are—not the inconsiderable troubles of inferior peoples which we can dismiss with a shrug but denials of the validity of the principle by which we live hence denials of our right to our way of life.

Woodrow Wilson knew it and told us the truth but we laughed him to scorn. That is why his punt walks again for in our uneasy minds there is a mocking whisper a taunting suggestion that if we had not laughed we might not have had a march again into the Valley of the Shadow. Ironical little devils murmur in our ears that it was a fine thing to save our skins by throwing Europe to the dogs of war in 1919 seeing what it has got us—a shrewd thing to blast the diabolical ambition of Wilson in order to make room for the meek benevolence of Hitler. They had the common sense of hardheaded realistic Americans who flung aside Woodrow so that they might stand face to face with Adolf! An ironic jest indeed—perhaps the greatest since the streets of an ancient city re-echoed the shout, Release unto us Barabbas!

Yet the worst did not befall. Perhaps there is some justification for the bland confidence of Americans that their country is the darling of the gods for even when not merely inviting ruin it expends labor and ingenuity to make sure that ruin shall fall upon it that ruin proves incomplete. For twenty years we had been asking for war and at last we got it. Yet when it came inexplicably and contrary to all logic and reason Britain stood up for a year unaided and alone. Contrary to all expectation and all expert opinion the Russian army's quality proved to be commensurate with its size. Con-

in which it appears. The truth is that men while they may sometimes be reasoning beings are always emotional beings.

This truth is not relevant to all sciences. It has no bearing on an investigation of the theory of wave mechanics for example, or an inquiry into the chemical composition of hormones. But it is the very essence of the science of government. Woodrow Wilson rarely made any concessions to the emotional nature of his fellows. He frequently infuriated them when he might have placated them without sacrificing anything of value and even more frequently he bewildered them when he might have explained with only trifling expenditure of time and effort. Moreover there is plenty of reason to suspect that he accounted it unto himself for righteousness that he appealed always to reason and conscience ruthlessly ignoring passion and prejudice. But in a ruler that is not righteousness. That jeopardizes the promotion of the general welfare which is the supreme duty of a ruler in a democratic state and what ever jeopardizes the discharge of a man's duty is a flaw in his conduct.

It is probable that if Wilson had been as clever a psychologist as both Roosevelts put together still he would have been doomed to defeat. Inability to comprehend the necessity of the League was inherent in the country and could not have been removed by the most skillful appeal. Nevertheless if Wilson's rectitude had been somewhat less austere his moral stature would have been not less but greater.

All that though is of the past. Wilson's personal faults are buried with him and even the shattering blast of Hitler's bugle-horn cannot release them from the tomb. What haunts our minds today is not the sometimes irritating personality but the statesman who declared "I am seeking only to face realities and to face them without soft concealments." Did he speak the truth? It seems ever more likely as the harshest sort of realities are thrust every day before our wavering eyes.

We failed to understand when he said "The day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured." Most of us then favored spending our blood and our might only to assure our own safety. Have we progressed beyond that point in twenty four years?

The question is an embarrassing one but it is of far greater consequence to the republic than any terms of war or any terms of peace. Have we realized yet that our own safety

realization of the fact that of political principles too it may be said that time and chance happeneth to them all. There is a strange delusion in this country that the weakness of France was the strength of her scoundrels the truth is it was rather the strength of the conviction of her honest men. Consider how hard it was even after the fearful lesson of national disaster for Americans to bring Giraud and De Gaulle together. Yet they were both patriots.

Without doubt, the Third Republic had its scoundrels but the deadlock that opened the way for the scoundrels was caused by its men of principles who were intransigent. A principle said the acid Professor Cornford is a rule of action which states a valid general reason for not doing any particular case what, to unprincipled instinct would appear to be right. At least it was so in France. Honest men would not perhaps could not certainly did not yield their principles far enough to set up an effective although imperfect, government. The ironies of French history are multitudinous but Frenchmen apparently have never drawn from them the obvious inference that no man should have so much confidence in the rightness of his own cause that he will check and hinder the operations of the government sooner than admit that there may be a modicum of right on his opponent's side.

Everywhere it is when honest men are hopelessly divided that thieves fill all the offices in America honest men have always been divided but never hopelessly so except in 1860 and the result then was the most fearful convulsion that our country has ever experienced. At all other times honest men while not convinced by a beating at the polls have retained enough doubt of their own omniscience to await the outcome peacefully and the experience of a hundred and sixty seven years has justified them.

Justified they are too by the ironical stories with which the history of their nation is studded for the last has been first, and the first last so often that only a fool will say of any man or event in public life. I know beyond peradventure what must be the outcome of this. It is something worth keeping in mind these days when the country approaches some of the most difficult and perplexing decisions it has ever been called upon to make. Some of us are bound to be disappointed but to despair would be to reject the lessons of our own history. What may seem to be a triumph at the time may lead us to woe unmeasurable but, on the other hand although

trary to all oriental calculation the paralyzing blow ■ Pearl Harbor did not paralyze but only enraged Fate relented and gave us time

So almost miraculously we have another chance We have also that perambulating conscience of America Woodrow Wilson come alive again and speaking in every man's ear telling us no fairy tales but stern old truths reminding us that greed is suicidal that suspicion of all the world ■ silly that self righteousness leads straight to humiliation That old man ■ still as he always was bitter but tonic Possibly we shall hear him even when the troubadours come around again, some other great engineer some other shrewd Yankee singing mellifluously of a chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage dulcetly inviting us to turn from the bleak Presbyterian prophet and put our trust in none of the ancient creeds that stem from Judea nor in their exponents whether priest or presbyter or rabbi but solely and completely in the Church of the Holy Dividends which ■ the religion of practical men

Perhaps—yet no man can say more than that we have the chance Probably no man can say with assurance what we have done after we have acted nor even for twenty years thereafter for if there is any conclusion to which examination of the ironies of American history leads it is that contemporary estimates are likely to be inaccurate in the extreme

But is this necessarily a depressing conclusion? It seems to me that it need be so only to a man much more convinced of the rightness of his own views than any man should be or that any man who has studied American history attentively can be

Indeed distrust expressed or implied of the eternal verity of one's own views ■ the secret of the survival of this republic It may astonish Europeans to hear it proclaimed that a real and deep rooted modesty is of the very essence of Americanism but it is so and a little reflection will establish it The republic has survived because the defeated party has always acquiesced in the decision at the polls the sole exception having occurred after the election of 1860 But this could not possibly have been repeated year after year had the defeated candidate and his friends been convinced to the bottom of their souls that they alone possessed the truth that ■ essential to salvation

We have had in the case of France an appalling demonstration of what happens to a democracy in which there is no

## CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

CHRISTOPHER DARLINGTON MORLEY was born in Haverford Pa. in 1890. Twenty years later he was graduated from Haverford College where for a dozen years his father had been a professor of mathematics. He is one of three brothers who all became Rhodes scholars. After three years at New College Oxford, Morley returned to America and joined the editorial staff of Doubleday Page. He maintained this connection for four years before going into newspaper work. He has written a column for various newspapers—the Philadelphia Inquirer the New York Evening Post the Saturday Review of Literature. He has been a versatile and prolific writer having produced some fifty books. His newspaper columns and other writings have been gathered into several collections of essays—*Pip Jabs Men* *Pet Shandygoat* *Plum Pudding*. Among his widely read novels have been *Parrus on Wheels* *The Hard Book Shop* *Thunder on the Left* and *Kitty Foyl*. Delightful verse—*Songs for a Little House*—and a play or two—*The Good Cow*—are among his varied output. In 1930 the famous rare-book dealer Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, founded a Fellowship in Bibliography at the University of Pennsylvania. This fellowship produces an annual series of lectures by distinguished authorities on some aspect of writing, publishing or book collecting. Morley was invited to give the first series of these public lectures in 1933. His talks were published under the title *Ex Libris Cassius*. In a felicitous and modest preface the author reminds the reader: "These were not lectures but conversations taken down with drastic fidelity by a disconcertingly accurate stenographer. Their colloquial character is obvious and it requires courage to print them in this form. If apology is needed it is supplied in this second paragraph of the following essay which is the second in the group of five talks."

## Three kinds of Collectors

IN THE Anglican Prayer book there is a magnificent passage which by just transposing the accent leap to the eye of the booklover. You find it written there that "The first collect for the day the second collect for peace the third collect for grace to live well." Of that triple division of collectors I hope the third may be our classification. Those who collect





telephone booth now dismantled out at Haverford College a telephone booth which during many undergraduate generations served as the only outlet of romance for a dormitory of young men. For many years the inhabitants of that dormitory did all their telephoning to Bryn Mawr over that one piece of copper wire a portion of which I rescued when the booth was torn down last year. And as you may imagine that copper wire now somewhat tarnished seems to show in its faded color signs of atomic fatigue. When I think what naive and youthful electricians must have traversed that shining thread I am moved with a sentimental recollection and I say to myself that that wire can charmingly symbolize the function of literature as communication.

The second item that I choose from this motley little collection is the silver mounted cork from a set of glass phials. That little series of test tubes was given to me years ago by a book collector for purposes that I will not insist upon but at any rate I say to myself that that little cork can represent in literature or in art the great function of intoxication or ecstasy. Similarly it might represent the narcotic or sedative functions of literature which are also important.

The third remainder in this cardboard box is a quartz Indian arrowhead which I picked up on the front lawn of a Long Island home during a spell of exceptionally hot weather a few years ago when on account of the drought the roots of the grass lay bare and the suburban gardener tended his turf more carefully than ever before. One evening mowing and watering he found this white razor sharp quartz arrowhead which had lain there I suppose since the red men of Paumanok were pushed out by the first Dutch commuters. And that reminded me that literature is also sometimes a sharp and penetrating missile. I think of that arrowhead to symbolize such literature as to take on the grand scale a man like Voltaire or to take on a smaller but equally sharp-edged scale a Philadelphian brother of our own Logan Pearsall Smith in his *Tivia*.

The fourth curiosity in this collection was a piece of fourteenth-century stained glass from Chartres Cathedral given me by the curator of that cathedral himself some years ago a piece of that irreproducible fourteenth-century blue which many of us have seen in the west window of that famous building. This was one of the pieces of the old original glass which was broken when those noble windows were taken down and buried underground for safekeeping during the war. As I

for the day may perhaps be collecting to sell again tomorrow In the case of those who collect for peace possibly one element of their pacification is the unworthy feeling that they have the best existing copy I hope that we are of those who collect for grace

I say to myself that one does not orate to his friends he talks with them And you must excuse certain informalities in these talks for the sincerity which I believe lies behind them.

I had never thought of myself as a collector until quite recently These unsought confessions have particular poignance for me at this time because now for the first time in ten years I am spending the winter in an apartment in the city divided from the books I know and love best except for a dozen or so which I had to choose as *ultima ratio* And therefore looking back around those shelves of mine from which I am momentarily separated and trying to think which of those well loved books I might mention to you I realized for the first time that perhaps I am more of a magpie more of a collector than I had supposed Going over those shelves before leaving them for the winter I came upon a little cardboard box the contents of which provide me with the symbolism I need for these talks In that cardboard box for a number of years it seems I had been putting away casual trivialities which seemed to me too precious to destroy and yet to an alien eye would have no meaning whatever In that box I found a great many old theatre ticket stubs of various colors I found buttons and broken buckles from wrist watch straps I found a piece of copper wire a piece of stained glass a silver mounted cork from a little set of four phials one of which got broken I found an Indian arrowhead and many other trivialities that I won't weary you with But I realized as I looked over those casual oddments that some instinct deeper than myself had caused me to put them away Every one of those queer items might be the theme of a story Put together they would compile a perhaps too embarrassing autobiography and looking over them in somewhat the mood of an executor for several dead selves I realized that I could take five or six of them and use them as what Stevenson calls moral emblems symbols of various moods which impel us to treasure great books

The first of these items that I symbolized in my mind was a piece of copper wire The full story of that piece of copper wire would be too long to tell Briefly it came from an old

telephone booth now dismantled out at Haverford College a telephone booth which during many undergraduate generations served ■ the only outlet of romance for a dormitory of young men. For many years the inhabitants of that dormitory did all their telephoning to Bryn Mawr over that one piece of copper wire a portion of which I rescued when the booth was torn down last year. And as you may imagine that copper wire now somewhat tarnished seems to show in its faded color signs of atomic fatigue. When I think what naive and youthful electricities must have traversed that shining thread I am moved with a sentimental recollection and I say to myself that that wire can charmingly symbolize the function of literature as communication.

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never be entirely eradicated. Those books that I loved are in a sense my wild oats. There is not one of them that does not ejaculate whole nervous systems of human relationship. When we hear collectors speak of association copies, they always mean books that have had some peculiarly complex relation with the author, but let us not forget that we readers have our own associations which are probably more important to us than the distant associations of the author. At any rate our associations are our own, and no one can dictate them to us. Therefore I suggest we think for a few moments about our own association copies. I suggest as employment for a pensive or a vacant mood that we trace the spiritual genealogy of the books that we ourselves have loved most. When did we first read them or own them? By what strangely delayed and twisted approaches have we come upon the books that mean most to us?

I can't forget for example that it was in a little Russian bookshop on the East Side of New York City that I came upon one of the greatest of American testimonies, Walt Whitman's *Prose*. Neither schools nor colleges nor the more fashionable bookstores of the western avenues had ever brought it home to my business and bosom that Walt Whitman had written a volume of prose certainly as important as his poetry, a book that we neglect at our intellectual peril.

I was accused to notice when I was in Philadelphia one day last spring, that the old familiar arguments against Walt Whitman are still doing service. Some robust Philadelphian wrote a letter in the *Public Ledger* protesting against Walt Whitman's having at length been admitted to the Hall of Fame. I admit that being put in the Hall of Fame does not solve any of the perplexing problems that Walt Whitman presents both for the critic and for the citizen, but at any rate it seems to me a step in the right direction. But not so to this correspondent of the *Ledger*. He says: Residents of this city remember Whitman simply as a picturesque loiterer who used to be seen on Market Street frequently with a market basket on his arm and sans necktie. He was poseur as his life story will show and shirked his responsibility wherever possible, and the only thing that was commendable in his entire career was his work as a nurse during the Civil War. Naturally Philadelphia, the great textile city did not like the idea of Walt going without a necktie, and so finally Walt's very generous hosts out in German town deplored one of them told me Walt's habit of going into the bathroom after breakfast and staying there a long



Kennie has helped to make more beautiful still with his wonderful Scottish American War Memorial. Alexander Smith became the Secretary of Edinburgh University as a young man I think we may take it for granted that the lives of university executives are difficult and harassed. At any rate we are told that he died of overwork and anxiety when he was just past the age of thirty-six. But his book still lives among a few occasional readers.

It is another Philadelphia footnote to remark that it was fifteen years after I first heard of that book before I actually saw it, when a generous Philadelphia collector Mr John C. Eckel the well known Dickens bibliographer gave me a copy of the first edition.

Dr Johnson you remember used to pray to be delivered from vacillation and vagrancy of mind. I reiterate that prayer but I am somewhat encouraged to remember that when I visited a library school in Wisconsin some months ago I first heard about the Dewey Decimal System which is the great intellectual crutch of the librarian profession. The Dewey Decimals are those mysterious digits you find on library cards by which all kinds of literature are pigeon holed and classified. And in a moment of morbid curiosity at the Wisconsin Library school I asked what was my classification number in the Dewey Decimal System and they told me it was 818.5. I didn't know whether to be cheered up or depressed. I didn't know whether that was supposed to be reckoned on a scale of 1000 being perfect or just what it meant so I inquired and they said, 818.5 means American Miscellaneous. And of course the tragedy is that once you have been classified in that Dewey Decimal System you have to stay in that classification forever because naturally you can't ask the Library of Congress to reprint all those cards and the librarians all over the country to shift their classifications. If you are once rated American Miscellaneous so you remain. I do feel at any rate that it gives one a sort of roving commission that atones for some apparent irrelevancy.

In that box where those five symbolic relics were there were two other small objects that I haven't mentioned. One was a pebble from the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean the other was a pebble from the bottom of a very small suburban pond. When my friend Captain David Bone the master of the Anchor Line Transylvania is coming westward and gets on soundings somewhere near the Newfoundland Banks he puts down his lead line to see what the bottom is like. At the base



of that lead ■ any of you who are seafaring men will know is a cup of tallow and that tallow brings up from the bottom bits of sand and shells or weed or small brown pebbles by which the sailor can calculate just about where he is That is a region where the weather is usually thick and you are more likely to know where you are by soundings than by taking the height of the sun Captain Bone had been collecting the best of those pebbles picked up on his many voyages to make a deep sea necklace for his daughter and he was kind enough to give me one of those small fragments from the bottom of the ocean as a souvenir of a voyage made with him It amused me to put beside that pebble another little fragment of white stone that I had found at the bottom of what I call Gissing Pond a very small suburban pool out in Long Island but which a certain partly human and partly canine character once mistook for the ocean itself If you put those two pebbles side by side certainly the more impressive of the two ■ the pebble from the bottom of Gissing Pond It is white and shiny it is a little bit larger than the Atlantic Ocean pebble and if you asked the average person which was the more important pebble he would pick the one from shallow water Is it not often just like that in our literary soundings? We cannot tell in our reveries about books whether the pebbles we are going to bring up may be from the bottom of a deep ocean or whether they may be only from a shallow suburban mere Perhaps in some ways one ■ as important as the other Do not forget that it ■ from hearsay of a small coral island that Shakespeare edified his magnificent fantasy of *The Tempest*

Having mentioned Gissing Pond it ■ only fair to explain that a little further I realized very well when I wrote a book using George Gissing's name for a character of somewhat enigmatic nature that it was an indefensible thing to do but that character would accept no other name I have often thought apologetically about this because I know that a good many readers have supposed that there might be some subtle satire intended There was none I had always been a great lover of George Gissing's books and it so happened that on the very day when one of Gissing's books *By the Ionian Sea* came to me our furnace man brought up from the village a small puppy in his pocket The dog was named Gissing He was a dog with somewhat theological overtones and he suggested ■ kind of fairy tale which was begun for the amusement of some children but which changed itself into some thing rather different But having been begun with that name

there seemed nothing else to be done about it. I admit that is not an important matter but I feel it is an apology or explanation that should be made.

I first heard of George Gissing, also in one of Mr Mosher's book catalogues from Portland, Maine. I remember very well the look of dismay that went around the editorial council of a large publishing house about sixteen years ago when I suggested that to put some of Gissing's novels back in print might be a worthy enterprise. It is quite true that it would probably have been a failing venture but it is remarkable to see what a revival of interest in Gissing's somber talent there has been in the last fifteen or twenty years.

One of the modern first editions which I think is most to be coveted is the 1903 first edition of Gissing's enchanting and enchanted book *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*. If there are among you any thrice fortunate people who have not yet read *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* one of the best loved of books among bibliophilic amateurs I can tell you how much I envy you. Only the other day one of those strange things happened that renew one's faith in the magnificence of chance. I was in a small Italian restaurant down near Washington Square in New York. I don't like it to go into the record, but it was an illegitimate kind of restaurant, and in that part of that kind of restaurant where people stand in a row and where sometimes conversation unexpectedly becomes bright and lambent and candid among people who hadn't known each other before there was a lady who was as the phrase is 'telling the world about a book that had meant a very great deal in her life. She had forgotten the title of the book and the name of the author but she was very eloquent on the subject of this book which had evidently had a great influence on her. And suddenly another man and I who overheard her couldn't help breaking into the conversation and saying 'I know what that book is and we told her the title. She cried out in an ecstasy 'Ryecroft! That's it. How I could have loved that man!'

Well those are the happy things that do occasionally occur. I must not identify her but she proved to be a person of importance and I couldn't help thinking to myself when she said 'How I could have loved that man' how Gissing poor Gissing needed it. He had magnificent powers but those who have read his novels attentively have noticed that he never shows that extraordinary liberation of energies which is released whenever there are happy and understanding relations



..... seemed nothing else to be done about it. I admit that is not an important matter but I feel it is an apology or explanation that should be made.

I first heard of George Gissing also in one of Mr Mosher's book catalogues from Portland, Maine. I remember very well the look of dismay that went around the editorial council of a large publishing house about sixteen years ago when I suggested that to put some of Gissing's novels back in print might be a worthy enterprise. It is quite true that it would probably have been a failing venture but it is remarkable to see what a revival of interest in Gissing's somber talent there has been in the last fifteen or twenty years.

One of the modern first editions which I think is most to be coveted is the 1903 first edition of Gissing's enchanting and enchanted book *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*. If there are among you any thrice fortunate people who have not yet read *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft* one of the best loved of books among bibliophilic amateurs I can tell you how much I envy you. Only the other day one of those strange things happened that renew one's faith in the magnificence of chance. I was in a small Italian restaurant down near Washington Square in New York. I don't like it to go into the record but it was an illegitimate kind of restaurant, and in that part of that kind of restaurant where people stand in a row and where sometimes conversation unexpectedly becomes bright and lambent and candid among people who hadn't known each other before there was a lady who was as the phrase is telling the world about a book that had meant a very great deal in her life. She had forgotten the title of the book and the name of the author but she was very eloquent on the subject of this book which had evidently had a great influence on her. And suddenly another man and I who overheard her couldn't help breaking into the conversation and saying "I know what that book is and we told her the title. She cried out in an ecstasy Ryecroft! That's it. How I could have loved that man!"

Well those are the happy things that do occasionally occur. I must not deny her but she proved to be a person of importance and I couldn't help thinking to myself when she said "How I could have loved that man" how Gissing poor Gissing needed it. He had magnificent powers but those who have read his novels attentively have noticed that he never shows that extraordinary liberation of energies which is released in these happy and understanding relations.



most enchanting comments on Thomas Hobbes person his life and his qualities. I do think that *Leviathan* is one of the dozen or so greatest books in the English language. It isn't very often that anybody mentions it, and if you do happen to mention it in casual conversation people will usually think you are speaking about a steamship.

I don't want to go away from the topic of Gissing's work too fast, because I like to imagine that in my interest in him there have been some hereditary influence at work. My grandfather was at one time one of the directors of the London publishing house of Chapman and Hall. Dickens's publishers—a fellow director of his, incidentally—was Anthony Trollope. I never could find out that either my grandfather or Anthony Trollope really did much hard work in connection with that publishing house, but it always pleased me very much to remember that in a scrapbook kept by my grandfather there is a letter to him from the reader of the publishing house whose name was George Meredith. There is a note in my grandfather's scrapbook from George Meredith asking him to read very carefully the manuscript of a novel by a young novelist in whom Meredith discerned much promise. The name of that young novelist was Thomas Hardy. Meredith in his career as a publisher's reader turned down a number of books that afterward became famous. *Evelyn* was one. *The Heavenly Twins* was another and some novels by Ouida even an early novel I am pleased to remember by Bernard Shaw was turned down by him. And if you have ever tried to read any of Bernard Shaw's novels you will sympathize with Meredith. Incidentally in a very enchanting book called *A Hundred Years of Publishing* by Arthur Waugh you will find a most entertaining description of George Meredith as Chapman and Hall's reader. He always wore lavender gloves to read manuscripts. He usually wore a gray checked suit, very neat and beautifully cut. His crisp gray hair his lavender gloves his gray suit, and always his bright scarlet tie were said to make a very profound impression upon the lily authors of his publishing house who would rather they said be turned down by George Meredith than be accepted by any other publisher. And one of my own perverse reasons for pride in that a novel written by an uncle of mine was turned down by George Meredith.

But although he turned down many admirable things two authors in fact three authors to whom he gave their first substantial ~~work~~ <sup>work</sup> were three so diverse writers as

between the two halves of humanity—I won't be so ungallant as to say the two halves. I will say the two divisions. One reason why *Ryecroft* is so fascinating a book is that it was written at the end of his life when after years of bitter struggle and disappointment happier conditions made it possible for some of his natural sweetness to show through.

Gissing is one of the few authors for whom I have ever deliberately gone to the dealers in rarity and bought first editions. I actually paid \$15.00 for my first edition in three volumes of *The Odd Women* one of the novels of his prime. As a footnote I might say for the confusion of wealthier collectors that I have very rarely paid more than that for any book and the books which are most precious to me have usually cost me very little. One of my marginalia on this course is the suggestion that we should bear in mind that it is often advisable to collect the contents of books rather than their bibliographic quiddities.

I think as I say it is only once or twice that I have paid more than \$15.00 for any book. I did pay \$25.00 for my *Religio Medici* (of course not a first edition but the fifth which I believe was the first to contain Sir Kenelm Digby's lively *Observations*). I paid only \$15.00 for my first edition of Hobbes' *Leviathan* one of the greatest books of the seventeenth century. It is a genuine perfect first with the exception that the binding has been repaired. I paid as much as \$22.50 for my first edition of Thomas Fuller's *The Holy State and the Profane State* an absolutely faultless unmodified copy of 1642. Those two books the *Leviathan* and the Fuller are two of the masterpieces of the seventeenth century which have not been made fashionable by the collecting moguls. If they had been taken up by modern fugelemen you would have to pay twenty or perhaps fifty times as much. Those two books can be got at somewhere near the prices I have mentioned or even lower from any really intelligent seventeenth-century bookseller (I mean a bookseller who specializes in the seventeenth century).

I don't like to see the whole profession the whole group of collectors going in lockstep down the road that has been blasted for them by some distinguished amateur and it is saddening to me sometimes to see how few collectors there are who try to blaze a trail along their own tastes and intuitions. If for example you should find yourself interested in Hobbes' *Leviathan* look up John Aubrey the seventeenth-century compiler of biographical who wrote the

and young man were Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad. I want to say something about Stevenson later and the curious continuity that exists in my own mind at any rate between Stevenson and Conrad. But the fictional passion of my heart, the last fifteen or twenty years has been my love of Conrad and it pleases me to remember that I have signed in his own hand, a copy of his book which was dearest to himself *The Mirror of the Sea*.

Although Conrad had voyaged practically everywhere else it was not until 1923 only a year before his death that he crossed the western ocean. He came as a passenger in Captain Bone's ship the *Tuscania* and his fellow passenger on that voyage was the Captain's brother Muirhead Bone the great artist. The finest portrait that has ever been done of Conrad was the etching Muirhead Bone did on shipboard when *The Old Ulysses* as he called him sat up in his red dressing gown in the cabin through all hours of the night and talked about his adventures over the seven seas. That marvelous etching by Bone shows the old mandarin outlines of that noble head and that curiously tilted Slavic face.

When Conrad arrived in New York in Captain Bone's ship Captain Bone did as shipmasters should do he made out what they call an inward manifest that is a statement of his most valuable cargo and in a copy of *The Mirror of the Sea* which I happened to have in my pocket when I went down to meet the ship Captain Bone wrote "Duty delivered in the port of New York in good condition Captain Joseph Conrad—Signed David W Bone Master." Conrad saw him doing this and although I would not have asked him for an inscription he was kind enough to witness it himself. The first essay in that enchanting book *The Mirror of the Sea* is called you remember "Landfalls and Departures." The sailor's landfall, you know in his first sight of land after a voyage when he falls in with the land and Muirhead Bone in that same copy of the book put in a very beautiful little water-color painting of the Fire Island Lightship which was Conrad's first landfall in North America.

Conrad's career raises the profoundest problems of consciousness and of literary art and the problem as to whether he was essentially a Frenchman or an Englishman. Some of the problems raised by his work we cannot dispatch in a moment and certainly one would not speak just casually of one of the great spirits of our time but I would like to remind you since it is the anniversary of the day on which





## JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH born in Knoxville in 1893 was graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1913. A long career at Columbia University started with graduate study in 1916 and continued for almost forty years. He was married in 1923 and during the year 1930-31 he was a Guggenheim fellow. From 1925 to 195 he was dramatic critic and a member of the editorial board of *The Nation*. He has lectured at Vassar and the New School for Social Research, has been president of the New York Drama Critics Circle, was one of the founders of the Literary Guild of America. He is the author of a diverse dozen or more books including *The Modern Temper* (1929) *Experience and Art* (1933) *The American Dramatist* 1918 (1939) and *Masters of Men* (1934) (which won the National Book Award for non-fiction). He has written scholarly biographies—of Poe (1926) Samuel Johnson (1944) Thoreau (1948)—and has edited the plays of Congreve and Eugene O'Neill, a translation of Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* and *Selected Letters of Thomas Gray*. He has also written nature essays (he was the 1954 winner of the John Burroughs medal for excellence in nature writing) which include *The Desert Year* (1952) and *The Bird in Two Worlds* (1953). These two volumes were preceded by *The Twentieth Seasons* (1949) which are considered both the aspect of nature as exhibited in Connecticut and the relationship of man to the universe. The following selection in this volume's opening essay

### April      *The Day of the Peepers*

*Hydrolucius* is what the biologists call him but to most of us he is simply the Spring Peeper. The popularizers of natural history have by no means neglected him but even without their aid he has made himself known to many whose only wild flower is the daisy and whose only bird is the robin. Everyone who has ever visited the country in the spring has heard him trilling from the marsh at twilight, and though few have ever caught sight of him most know that he is a little inch long frog who has just waked from his winter sleep. In southern Connecticut he usually begins to peep on some day between

his mastery of ships and the sea was officially authenticated of a few words that I myself have rarely been able to read without a moistening of the eye. They were written by Cunninghame Graham just after Conrad's death and please note the marvelously touching art with which in this little brief tribute Cunninghame Graham introduces into this obituary of a great sailor technical sea terms.

The rain had cleared and the sun poured down upon us as in procession we bore the coffin to the grave. The semi-circle of Scotch firs formed as it were a little harbor for him. The breeze blew freshly sou' west by south, a little westerly. A good wind as I thought to steer up channel by and one that he who would no longer feel it on his cheek looking aloft to see that the sails were drawing properly must have been glad to carry when he struck soundings passing the Wolf Rock after foul weather in the bay. Handsomely he who lay in it might well have said they lowered the coffin down. The priest had left his Latin and said a prayer or two in English and I was glad of it for English surely was the speech the master mariner most loved and honored in the loving with new graces of his own. All was well chosen for his resting place and so we left him with his sails all duly furled, ropes flemished down and with the anchor holding truly in the kind Kentish earth until the judgment day. The gulls will bring him tidings as they fly past above his grave.

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### April    The Day of the Peepers

*Hyla crucifer* is what the biologists call him, but to most of us he is simply the Spring Peeper. The popularizers of natural history have by no means neglected him but even without them he has made himself known to many whose only wild flower is the daisy and whose only bird is the robin. Everyone who has ever visited the country in the spring has heard him trilling from the marsh at twilight, and though few have ever caught a glimpse of him most know that he is a little much longer frog who has just awaked from his winter sleep. In southern Connecticut he usually begins to pipe on some day between



another with a wild surprise. It has happened again though there was nothing during the long months that passed to support our conviction that it could and would.

We had, to be sure the waiting pages of our calendars marked June July and even of all things August. The sun, so the astronomers had assured us had turned northward on a certain date and theoretically had been growing stronger day by day. But there was, often enough, little in the mercury of our thermometers or the feel of our fingers to confirm the fact. Many a March day had felt colder than the milder days of February. And merely astronomical seasons have after all, very little relation to any actual human experience either as visible phenomena or as events bringing with them concomitant earthly effects.

Not one man out of a hundred thousand would be aware of the solstices or the equinoxes if he did not see their dates set down in the almanac or did not read them in the news paper. They cannot be determined without accurate instruments and they correspond to no phenomena he is aware of. But the year as we live it does have its procession of recurring events and it is a curious commentary on the extent to which we live by mere symbols that ten men know that the spring equinox occurs near the twenty first of March to one who would give you even the approximate date when the peepers begin in his community and that remains true even if he happens to be a countryman and even if he usually remarks year after year when they do begin.

It is true that the Day of the Peepers is a movable feast. But so is Easter which—as a matter of fact—can come earlier or later by just about the same number of days that on the calendar I have kept separates the earliest from the latest date upon which *Hyla caudifer* begins to call. Moreover the earliness or the lateness of the peepers means something as the earliness or the lateness of Easter does not.

Whatever the stars may say or whatever the sun's altitude may be spring has not begun until the ice has melted and life begun all over again. Your peeper makes a calculation which would baffle a meteorologist. He takes into consideration the maximum to which the temperature has risen the minimum to which it has fallen during the night, the relative length of the warmer and the colder periods besides no doubt other factors hard to get down in tables or charts. But at last he  
 cent has come . . .  
 been just warm



have missed their attempt to determine when Easter will be because they consulted a lay calendar to find the full moon instead of concerning themselves with the Epact and considering the theoretical ecclesiastical full moon rather than the actual one. How much easier it is to celebrate the Day of the Peepers instead and how much more meaningful too! On that day something miraculous and full of promise has actually happened and that something announces itself in no uncertain terms.

Over any astronomically determined festival the Day of the Peepers has moreover another advantage even greater than the simplicity with which it defines itself or the actuality of its relation to the season it announces for *Hyla crucifer* is a sentient creature who shares with us the drama and the exultation who indeed sings our hosannahs for us. The music of the spheres is a myth to say that the heavens rejoice is a pathetic fallacy but there is no missing the rejoicings from the marsh and no denying that they are something shared. Under the stars we feel alone but by the pond side we have company.

To most, to be sure *Hyla* is a *vox et pater a nihil*. Out of a thousand who have heard him hardly one has ever seen him at the time of his singing or recognized him if perchance he has happened by pure accident to see squatting on the branch of some shrub the tiny inch long creature gray or green according to his mood and with a dark cross over his back. But it was this tiny creature who some months before had congregated with his fellows in the cold winter to sing and make love. No one could possibly humanize him as one humanizes a pet and so come to feel that he belongs to us rather than—what is infinitely more important—that we both equally belong to something more inclusive than ourselves.

Like all the reptiles and the amphibians he has an aspect which is inscrutable and antediluvian. His thoughts must be inconceivably different from ours and his joy hardly less so. But the fact is comforting rather than the reverse for if we are nevertheless somehow united with him in that vast category of living things which is so sharply cut off from every thing that does not live at all then we realize how broad the base of the category is how much besides ourselves is as it were on our side. Over against the atoms and the stars are set both men and frogs. Life is not something entrenched in man alone in a creature who has not been here so very long and





mathematician not the creator of things seen and heard and felt. As he is taught to trust less and less the evidence of the five senses with which he was born he lives less and less in the world which they seem to reveal more and more with the concepts of physics and biology. Even his body is no longer most importantly the organs and muscles of which he is aware but the hormones of which he is told.

The very works of art that he looks at when he seeks delight through the senses are not longer representations of what the eye has seen but constructions and designs—or in other words another order of abstractions. It is no wonder that for such a one spring should come not when the peepers begin but when the sun crosses the equator or rather—since that is only a human interpretation of the phenomenon—when the inclined axis of the earth is for an instant pointed neither toward nor away from the sun but out into space in such a way that it permits the sun's rays to fall upon all parts of the earth's surface for an equal length of time. For him astronomy does not as it did for primitive man represent the one successful attempt to intellectualize and render abstract a series of natural phenomena. It is instead merely one more of the many systems by which understanding is substituted for experience.

Surely one day a year might be set aside on which to celebrate our ancient loyalties and to remember our ancient origins. And I know of none more suitable for that purpose than the Day of the Peepers. "Spring is come!" I say when I hear them and "The most ancient of Christs has risen!" But I also add something which for me at least is even more important.

Don't forget, I whisper to the peepers, "we are all in this together."




Archives in Washington would actually have been as innocent as it might have looked damning.

It would have shown me in the company of Mrs. Nichols head of the information desk at the State War and Navy Building (a psychic lady I had known since I was six) George P. Martin, proprietor of the Post Café and Mrs. Rabbit his assistant Frank Farrington, a movie actor who had played the part of a crook named Brame in 'The Million Dollar Mystery' and Jack Bridges, a Los Angeles air mail flier and Hispano-Suiza expert. I doubt if any such photographs even me showing me borrowing twenty dollars from Bridges half an hour after meeting him for the first time in my life would have shaken Mr. Shand's confidence in me.

Mr. Shand called me to his office about a week before I was to sail for France and the Paris Embassy. He was a tall, quiet, courteous gentleman and he had only one question to ask me. He wanted to know if all my grandparents had been born in the United States. I said yes, he wished me Godspeed, we shook hands and I left. That's all there was to it. Waking up at night now and looking back on it I sometimes wonder how I would have come out of one of those three men inquisitions the Department was caught conducting last year. Having as great a guilt sense as any congressman and a greater tendency to confession it might have taken me hours to dredge up out of my mind and memory all the self-indictments that must have been there. I believed then and still do that generals of the Southern Confederacy were in the main superior to generals of the Northern armies. I suspected there were flaws in the American political system. I doubted the virgin birth of United States senators. I thought that German cameras and English bicycles were better than ours and I denied the existence of actual proof that God was exclusively a citizen of the United States. But, as I say, Mr. Shand merely asked me about my grandparents, and that was all. I realize now that, as a measure of patriotism, the long existence of my ancestors on American soil makes me more loyal than Virginia Dare or even George Washington, but I didn't give it any thought at the time.

Before I sailed on the SS. Onzaba, a passenger ship converted into an Army transport and looking rather sheepish about it, I was allowed to spend four days in Columbus, Ohio, and my mother has preserved for reasons known only to

—  —

snapshot taken of me on the last day of my leave



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Before I sailed on the S.S. Onzaba, a passenger ship converted into an Army transport and looking rather sheepish about it, I was allowed to spend four days in Columbus Ohio and my mother has preserved for reasons known only to mothers a snapshot taken of me on the last day of my leave.

The subject of the photograph is obviously wearing somebody else's suit which not only convicts him of three major faults in a code clerk—absent mindedness carelessness and peccability—but gives him the unwonted appearance of a saluki who through some egregious mischance of nature has exchanged his own ears for those of a barn owl. If this would not be enough to cause a special agent to phone Hoover personally *regarde* as the French *Sûreté* would say excitedly *the figure of this alarming indiscret*. His worried expression indicates that he has just mislaid a code book or what is worse has sold one. Even Mr. Hoover's dullest agent could tell that the picture is that of a man who would be putty in the hands of a beautiful or even a dowdy female spy. The subject's curious but unmistakable you ask me and I'll tell you look shows that he would babble high confidences to low companions on his third *pernod à l'eau*. This man could even find some way to compromise the Department of Agriculture, let alone the Department of State.

The picture would have aroused no alarm in the old days however for it was almost impossible to be a security risk in the State Department in 1918 no matter how you looked. All our code books except one were quaint transparencies dating back to the time when Hamilton Fish was Secretary of State under President Grant and they were intended to save words and cut telegraph costs not to fool anybody. The new code book had been put together so hastily that the word "America" was left out and code groups so closely paralleled true readings that *LOVVE* for example was the symbol for love.

Whatever slight illusion of secrecy we code clerks may have had was dispelled one day by a dour gentleman who announced that the Germans had all our codes. It was said that the Germans now and then got messages through to Washington taunting us about our childish ciphers and suggesting on one occasion that our clumsy device of combining two codes in a desperate effort at deception would have been a little harder if we had used two other codes which they named. This may have been rumor or legend like the story current at the time that six of our code books were missing and that a seventh neatly wrapped firmly tied and accompanied by a courteous note had been returned to one or another of our embassies by the Japanese either because they had finished with it or because they already had one.

A system of deception as easy to see through as the passing attack of a grammar school football team naturally produces

a cat-in-the-hat attitude. In enciphering messages in one code, in which the symbol for quote was (to make up a group) "ZOXIL", we were permitted to use "UNZOXIL" for unquote, an aid to perspicuity that gave all code clerks the depressing feeling that our tedious work was merely an exercise in block lettering. The Department may have comforted itself with the knowledge that even the most ingenious and complex codes could have been broken down by enemy cipher experts. Unzoxilation just made it a little easier for them.

Herbert O. Yardley, one time chief cryptographer of the War Department, warned the government in a book published nearly twenty years ago that the only impregnable codes are those whose pattern is mechanically jumbled in transmission by a special telegraphic method that reassembles the pattern at the point of reception. To prove his point, Yardley revealed how he had broken the toughest Japanese code five years before. The government must have taken his advice. I doubt that we could have got through a second world war shouting ZOXIL. Here we come ready or not UNZOXIL.

The State Department, in the happy go-lucky tradition of the time forgot to visa my special diplomatic passport, and this was to cause a tremendous *brouhaha* later on when the French discovered I was loose in their country without the right seals and signatures they so devoutly respect. The captain of the *Orizaba* wanted nothing to do with me when I boarded his ship whether my passport was visaed or not. It had no intention of taking orders from the State Department or carrying its code clerks and who the hell was Robert Lansing anyway? He finally let me stay on board after I had bowed and scraped and touched my forelock for an hour but he refused to monkey around getting my trunk on board. When I received it in Paris more than a year later everything in it was covered with the melted chocolate of a dozen Hershey bars I had tucked in here and there.

I had been instructed to report to Colonel House at the Hotel Crillon when I got to Paris but I never saw him. I saw instead an outraged gentleman named Auchincloss who plainly regarded me as an unsuccessfully comic puppet in a crude and inexcusable practical joke. He said bitterly that code clerks had been showing up for days that Colonel House did not want even one code clerk let alone twelve or fifteen and that I was to go on over to the Embassy where I belonged. The explanation was I think as simple as it was monumental. Several weeks before the State Department in



Washington had received a cablegram from Colonel House in Paris urgently requesting the immediate shipment of twelve or fifteen code clerks to the Crillon where headquarters for the American Peace Delegation had been set up. It is plain to me now what must have happened. Colonel House's cablegram must have urgently requested the immediate shipment of twelve or fifteen code books, not code clerks. The cipher groups for books and clerks must have been nearly identical, say DOGEC and DOGED, and hence a setup for the telegraphic garble. Thus if my theory is right, the single letter D sent me to Paris when I had originally been slated for Berne. Even after thirty years, the power of that minuscule slip of the alphabet gives me a high sense of insecurity. A D<sup>n</sup> for a C sent Colonel House clerks instead of books and sent me to France instead of Switzerland. On the whole, I came off far better as events proved than the Colonel did. There I was in Paris with a lot of jolly colleagues, and there was Colonel House up to his ears in code clerks but without any code books or at least not enough to handle the flow of cablegrams to and from the Crillon when the Peace Conference got under way.

That tiny D was to involve the State Department, the Paris Embassy, the Peace Conference and in a way that would have delighted Gilbert and Sullivan, the United States Navy in a magnificent comic opera of confusion. An admiral of the Navy for some reason (probably because he had a lot of Navy code books) arbitrarily took over at the Crillon the State Department's proud prerogative of diplomatic communication and a code shambles that might have perplexed Herbert Yardley himself developed when cablegrams in Navy codes were dispatched to the State Department in Washington which could not figure them out and sent back bewildered and frantic queries in State Department codes which the admiral and his aides could not unravel. The Navy has always been proud of its codes, and the fact that they couldn't be broken by the State Department only went to show how strong they were but when communication between the Peace Conference and Washington came to a dead stop, the admiral agreed to a compromise. His clerks, young and eager junior lieutenants, would use the State Department codes. This compounded the confusion since the lieutenants didn't know how to use the strange codes. The dozen State Department clerks Colonel House had turned away and now badly needed were finally sent for after a month but even then they were forced under

operation of the Navy. The Great Confusion was at last brought to an end when the desperate State Department finally turned to a newspaperman for help and assigned him to go and get its stolen power of diplomatic communication and keep it safe where it belonged. Not since an American battleship many years before in firing a twenty-one gun salute in honor of the President of France had accidentally used real shells and blown the berytus out of the harbor of Le Havre had the American Navy so royally loused up a situation. And that of it—a DOGEC for a DOGED would have sent me to Berner where nothing at all ever happened.

The last time I saw the old building at 5 Rue de Chaillot, that housed the chancery of the American Embassy when I was a code clerk was in 1937. Near the high, grilled door a plaque proclaimed that Myron T. Herrick was our Ambassador during the first World War thus perpetuating a fond American misconception and serving as a monument to the era of the Great Confusion. The truth is that Herrick served during only the first four months of the war and from December 1914 until after the war in 1919 an unsung man named William M. Sharp was our Ambassador to France. This note of bronze fuzziness cheered me in a peculiar way. It was a brave, cockeyed testament to the enduring strength of a nation that can get more ingloriously mixed up than any other and somehow gloriously come out of it in the end.

As I stood there before the old chancery I remembered another visit I had made to 5 Rue de Chaillot, in 1925 and for the convenience of the F B I who must already have twenty three exhibits to sling at me when I am called up before some committee or other I offer my adventure in 1925 as Exhibit X. Myron Herrick was once more our Ambassador to France and I was granted an interview with him, or as Counsellor Sheldon Whitehouse insisted on calling it, an audience. I had given up diplomacy for journalism as I used to explain it, and I needed material for an article I was writing about Herrick for an American newspaper. I decided I ought to have a little art to go along with the story such as a photograph of the Ambassador's office—a large bright, well appointed room on the second floor facing the street. I knew I couldn't get official permission to take a picture of the room but this didn't discourage me. I had discovered that the same old French chancery I lived in the same rooms on the ground floor of the chancery and controlled the opening of the great, grilled door. Remembering that Sunday had always been an off day with a

Washington had received a cablegram from Colonel House in Paris urgently requesting the immediate shipment of twelve or fifteen code clerks to the Crillon where headquarters for the American Peace Delegation had been set up. It is plain to me now what must have happened. Colonel House's cablegram must have urgently requested the immediate shipment of twelve or fifteen code books not code clerks. The cipher groups for books and clerks must have been nearly identical say DOGEC and DOGED and hence a setup for the telegraphic garble. Thus if my theory is right the single letter "D" sent me to Paris when I had originally been slated for Berne. Even after thirty years the power of that minuscule slip of the alphabet gives me a high sense of insecurity. A "D" for a "C" sent Colonel House clerks instead of books and sent me to France instead of Switzerland. On the whole I came off far better as events proved than the Colonel did. There I was in Paris with a lot of jolly colleagues and there was Colonel House up to his ears in code clerks but without any code books or at least not enough to handle the flow of cablegrams to and from the Crillon when the Peace Conference got under way.

That tiny "D" was to involve the State Department, the Paris Embassy, the Peace Conference and in a way that would have delighted Gilbert and Sullivan the United States Navy in a magnificent comic opera of confusion. An admiral of the Navy for some reason (probably because he had a lot of Navy code books) arbitrarily took over at the Crillon the State Department's proud prerogative of diplomatic communication and a code shambles that might have perplexed Herbert Yardley himself developed when cablegrams in Navy codes were dispatched to the State Department in Washington which could not figure them out and sent back bewildered and frantic queries in State Department codes which the admiral and his aides could not unravel. The Navy has always been proud of its codes and the fact that they couldn't be broken by the State Department only went to show how strong they were but when communication between the Peace Conference and Washington came to a dead stop the admiral agreed to a compromise. His clerks young and eager junior lieutenants would use the State Department codes. This compounded the confusion since the lieutenants didn't know how to use the strange codes. The dozen State Department clerks Colonel House had turned away and now badly needed were finally sent for after a month but even then they were forced to work under the

experts on of the Navy The Great Confusion was at last brought to an end when the desperate State Department finally turned to a newspaperman for help and assigned him to go and get its stolen power of diplomatic communication and bring it back where it belonged Not since an American battle ship many years before in firing a twenty-one gun salute in honor of the President of France had accidentally used real shells and blown the bejeezus out of the harbor of Le Havre had the American Navy so royally loused up a situation And think of it—a DOGEC for a DOGED would have sent me to Berne where nothing at all ever happened.

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skeleton staff in charge I picked out a clear sunny Sabbath for my exploit I went to the chancery and pushed the bell and the *concierge* clicked the lock from her room I went in said *Bonjour Madame* went upstairs photographed the Ambassador's office came down again having been challenged by nobody said *Bonjour Madame* to the *concierge* raised my hat politely and went away

The Republicans were in charge of the Embassy then not the Democrats as in my code-clerk days but things hadn't changed much I am a pretty good hand at time exposures and the photograph came out well There is still a print of it in the art morgue of an American newspaper or ought to be but it is merely a view of a room in the home of whatever French family now lives at 5 Rue de Chaillot

We probably learned a lot during the recent war and I doubt if tourists with cameras could get into any of our Embassies today If this belated confession makes it a bit harder for them anyway I shall be very happy indeed I must close now since somebody is knocking at the door Why it's a couple of strange men! Now what in the world could *they* want with me?

## EDMUND WILSON

EDMUND WILSON born in 1895 in Red Bank, N. J. was educated at Princeton from which he was graduated in 1916. Immediately after college he became for a year a reporter on the *New York Evening Sun*. Army service in World War I then claimed him. A return to civil life brought the first of his four marriages and employment for a year (1920-21) as a managing editor of *Variety*. His first book, co-authored with John Peale Bishop appeared a year later. He has been writing and publishing volumes of verse, fiction, plays, studies of current affairs and essays in literary criticism continuously ever since. From 1926 to 1931 he was an associate editor of the *New Republic* and from 1944 to 1948 he was book reviewer for *The New Yorker*. His fifth book, *As I See It* (1931) brought him to the forefront of American literary criticism. In the next year he published *The American Litter—A Year of the Slump*. This was followed five years later by *Tea and Sympathy* and, in 1940 by *Two Distant Shores*. Between them came *This Room and This Garden* and *The Mind of the Matter* (1937) a volume of plays. In 1946 his book of stories *Memoirs of Hecate County* elicited both praise and such scandalized disapproval that it was withdrawn from sale. Among his volumes of criticism have been *The Triple Threat* (1938) *The Wound and the Bow* (1941) *Class and Comedians* (1950) largely composed of articles from *The New Yorker* and *The Shores of Light* (1952) a collection of reviews written for the *New Republic* during the 1920's and 1930's. The following selection is taken from *The Boys in the Back Room* (1941) in the revised text included in *Class and Comedians*.

## John Steinbeck

JOHN STEINBECK is also a native Californian, and he has occupied himself more with the life of the State than any of these other writers. His exploration in his novels of the region of the Salinas Valley has been more tenacious and searching than anything else of the kind in our recent fiction, with the exception of Faulkner's exhaustive study of the State of Mississippi.

skeleton staff in charge I picked out a clear sunny Sabbath for my exploit I went to the chancery and pushed the bell and the concierge clicked the lock from her room I went in said *Bonjour Madame* went upstairs photographed the Ambassador's office came down again having been challenged by nobody said *Bonjour Madame* to the concierge raised my hat politely and went away

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dogs In *The Grapes of Wrath* the journey of the Joads is figured at the beginning by the progress of a turtle and is accompanied and parodied all the way by animals insects and birds When the expropriated sharecroppers in Oklahoma are compelled to abandon their farm we get an extended picture of the invasion of the house by the bats the weasels the owls the mice and the pet cats that have gone back to the wild Lennie in *Of Mice and Men* likes to carry around pet animals toward which as well as toward human beings he has murderous animal instincts The stories in *The Long Valley* are almost entirely about plants and animals and Mr Steinbeck does not give the effect as Lawrence or Kipling does of romantically raising the animals to the stature of human beings but rather of assimilating the human beings to animals *The Chrysanthemums* is about a woman who identifies herself with, respectively chrysanthemums a white quail and a snake In *Flight* a young Mexican boy who has killed a man and run away into the mountains is finally reduced to a state so close to that of the beasts that he is apparently mistaken by a mountain lion for another four-footed animal and in the fantasy *Saint Katy the Virgin* in which a vicious pig is made to repent and become a saint the result is not to dignify the animal as the *Little Flowers of Saint Francis* does for example with the wolf of Agubbio but to make human religion ridiculous

Nor does Steinbeck love his animals as D H Lawrence does The peculiar point of view is well analyzed in connection with Thomas Wayne in *To a God Unknown* He was not kind to animals at least no kinder than they were to each other but he must have acted with a consistency beasts could understand for all creatures trusted him Thomas liked animals and understood them and he killed them with no more feeling than they had about killing each other He was too much an animal himself to be sentimental And Steinbeck does not even dwell much as Lawrence likes to do on the perceptions of his various beasts each after its own kind It is the habits and behavior of the animals not the impression they make that interests him

The chief subject of Mr Steinbeck's fiction has been thus not those aspects of humanity in which it is most thoughtful, imaginative constructive nor even those aspects of animals that seem most attractive to humans but rather the processes of life itself In the ordinary course of nature living organisms are continually being destroyed and among the principal things



And what has Mr Steinbeck found in this country he knows so well? I believe that his virtuosity in a purely technical way has tended to obscure his themes. He has published eight volumes of fiction which represent a variety of forms and which have thereby produced an illusion of having been written from a variety of points of view. *Tortilla Flat* was a comic idyl with the simplification almost of a folk tale. *In Dubious Battle* was a strike novel centering around Communist organizers and following a fairly conventional pattern. *Of Mice and Men* was a compact little drama contrived with almost too much cleverness and a parable which criticized humanity from a non-political point of view. *The Long Valley* was a series of short stories dealing mostly with animals in which poetic symbols were presented in realistic settings and built up with concrete detail. *The Grapes of Wrath* was a propaganda novel full of preachments and sociological interludes and developed on the scale of an epic. Thus attention has been diverted from the content of Mr Steinbeck's work by the fact that when his curtain goes up he always puts on a different kind of show.

Yet there is in Mr Steinbeck's fiction a substratum which remains constant and which gives it a certain weight. What is constant in Mr Steinbeck is his preoccupation with biology. He is a biologist in the literal sense that he interests himself in biological research. The biological laboratory in the short story called *The Snake* is obviously something which he knows at first hand and for which he has a strong special feeling and it is one of the peculiarities of his vocabulary that it runs to biological terms. But the laboratory described in *The Snake* the tight little building above the water where the scientist feeds white rats to rattlesnakes and fertilizes startish ova is also one of the key images of his fiction. It is the symbol of Mr Steinbeck's tendency to present human life in animal terms.

Mr Steinbeck almost always in his fiction is dealing either with the lower animals or with humans so rudimentary that they are almost on the animal level and the relations between animals and people are as intimate as those in the zoophile fiction of David Garnett and D. H. Lawrence. The idiot in *The Pastures of Heaven* who is called Little Frog and Coyote shows his kinship with the animal world by continually making pictures of birds and beasts. In *Tortilla Flat* there is the Pirate who lives in a kennel with his dogs and has practically forgot ten human companionship. In *In Dubious Battle* there is an other character whose personality is confused with that of his

labor movement with radical leadership from most treatments of such subjects of its period is again the biological point of view. The strike leaders here are Communists as they are in many labor novels but *In Dubious Battle* is not really based on the formulas of Communist ideology. The kind of character produced by the Communist movement and the Communist strategy in strikes (of the Communism of the day before yesterday) is described by Mr. Steinbeck and it is described with a certain amount of admiration yet the party member of *In Dubious Battle* does not talk like a Marxist of even the Stalinist revision. The cruelty of these revolutionists though they are working for a noble ideal and must immolate themselves in the struggle is not palliated by the author any more than the cruelty of the half-witted Lennie and we are made to feel all through the book that impressive though the characters may be they are presented primarily as examples of how life in our age behaves. There is developed in the course of the story—especially by a fellow traveler doctor who seems to come closer than the Communist to expressing Mr. Steinbeck's own ideas—a whole philosophy of group-man as an animal.

"It might be like this Mac. When group man wants to move he makes a standard. God wills that we recapture the Holy Land or he says We fight to make the world safe for democracy or he says We will wipe out social injustice with communism. But the group doesn't care about the Holy Land or Democracy or Communism. Maybe the group simply wants to move to fight and uses these words simply to reassure the brains of individual men.

How asks Mac do you account for people like me directing things moving things? That puts your group man out.

You might be an effect as well as a cause Mac. You might be an expression of group man, a cell endowed with a special function like an eye cell drawing your force from group man and at the same time directing him like an eye. Your eye both takes orders from and gives orders to your brain.

This isn't practical objects Mac. What's all this kind of talk got to do with hungry men with lay-offs and unemployment?

It might have a great deal to do with them. It isn't a very long time since tetanus and lockjaw were not connected. There

that destroy them are the predatory appetite and the competitive instinct that are necessary for the very survival of eating and breeding creatures. This impulse of the killer has been preserved in a simpleton like Lennie of *Of Mice and Men* in a form in which it is almost innocent and yet Lennie has learned from his more highly developed friend that to yield to it is to do something "bad." In his struggle against the instinct, he loses. Is Lennie bad or good? He is betrayed as the author implies all our human intentions are by the uncertainties of our animal nature. And it is only as a rule on this primitive level that Mr Steinbeck deals with moral questions the virtues like the crimes for him are still a part of these planless and almost aimless of these almost unconscious processes. The preacher in *The Grapes of Wrath* is disillusioned with the human moralities and his sermon at the grave of Grampa Joad so lecherous and mean during his lifetime evidently gives expression to Mr Steinbeck's own point of view. "This here ol' man jus lived a life an' jus died out of it. I don't know whether he was good or bad but that don't matter much. He was alive an' that's what matters. An' now he's dead an' that don't matter. Heard a fella tell a poem one time an' he says All that lives is holy."

The subject of *The Grapes of Wrath* which is supposed to deal with human society is the same as the subject of *The Red Pony* which is supposed to deal with horses' loyalty to life itself. The men who feel themselves responsible for having let the red pony die must make up for it by sacrificing the mare in order that a new pony may be brought into the world alive. And so Rose of Sharon Joad with her undernourished baby born dead, must offer her milk in the desolate barn which is all she has left for a shelter to another wretched victim of famine and flood on the point of death from starvation. To what end should ponies and Oakies continue to live on the earth? "And I wouldn't pray for a ol' fella that's dead," the preacher goes on to say. "He's awright. He got a job to do but it's all laid out for 'im an' there's on'y one way to do it. But us we got a job to do an' they's a thousan' ways an' we don't know which one to take. An' if I was to pray it'd be for the folks that don't know which way to turn."

This preacher who has lost his religion does find a way to turn: he becomes a labor agitator and this theme has already been dealt with more fully in the earlier novel *In Dubious Battle*. But what differentiates Mr Steinbeck's picture of -

Steinbeck's efforts to make them figure as heroic human symbols, one cannot help feeling that these Okies too do not exist for him quite seriously as people. It is as if human sentiments and speeches had been assigned to a flock of lemmings on their way to throw themselves into the sea. One remembers the short story called *Johnny Bear*. Johnny Bear is another of Steinbeck's idiots. He has exactly the physique of a bear and seems in almost every way subhuman, but he is endowed with an uncanny gift for reproducing with perfect mimicry the conversations he overhears, though he understands nothing of their human meaning.

It is illuminating to look back from *The Grapes of Wrath* to one of the earliest of Steinbeck's novels, *To a God Unknown*. In this book he is dealing frankly with the destructive and re-productive forces as the cardinal principles of nature. In one passage the hero is described by one of the other characters as never having known a person. You aren't aware of persons, Joseph, only people. You can't see units. Joseph only the whole. He finds himself almost unconsciously and in the invention of Christianity practicing a primitive nature cult, to which in time of terrible drought he sacrifices first his wife then himself as blood offerings to bring the rain. This story though abstract has a certain interest and it evidently represents, on the part of Steinbeck just turned thirty, an honorably sincere attempt to find expression for his view of the world and his conception of the powers that move it. When you hush away the maskish erudite from the people of his later novels you get down to a similar conception of a humanity not of units but lumped in a whole to a vision equally grim in its cycles of extinction and renewal.

Not, however, that John Steinbeck's picture of human beings as lemmings as grass that is left to die does not have its striking validity for the period in which we are living. In our time Shakespeare's angry ape dressed in his little authority seems to make of all the rest of mankind angry apes or cowering rodents. The one thing that was imagined with intensity in Aldous Huxley's novel *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* was the eighteenth-century exploiter of the slave trade degenerating into a fetal anthropoid. Many parts of the world are today being flooded with migrants like the loads deprived of the dignity of a human society forbidden the dignity of human work and made to flee from their houses like prairie-dogs from before a prairie fire. Aldous Huxley has a good deal to say about a fundamental

are still primitives in the world who don't know children are the result of intercourse. Yes, it might be worthwhile to know more about group man, to know his nature, his ends, his desires. They're not the same as ours. The pleasure we get in scratching an itch causes death to a great number of cells. Maybe group-man gets pleasure when individual men are wiped out in a way.

Later when the mob of striking fruit pickers begins to get out of hand, the Communists themselves begin to think of them in these infra-human terms:

"They're down there now. God, Mac, you ought to see them. It was like all of them disappeared and it was just one big animal going down the road. Just all one animal."

The animal doesn't want the barricade. I don't know what it wants. Trouble is, guys that study people always think it's men and it isn't men. It's as different from men as dogs are. Jim, it's swell when we can use it, but we don't know enough. When it gets started it might do anything.

So the old pioneer of *The Leader of the People* describes a westward migration which he himself once led as "a whole bunch of people made into one big crawling beast." Every man wanted something for himself, but the big beast that was all of them wanted only westering.

This tendency on Steinbeck's part to animalize humanity is evidently one of the causes of his relative unsuccess at creating individual humans. The *paisanos* of *Tortilla Flat* are not really quite human beings; they are cunning little living dolls that amuse us as we might be amused by pet guinea pigs, squirrels, or rabbits. They are presented through a special convention which is calculated to keep them cut off from any kinship with the author or the reader. In *The Grapes of Wrath*, on the other hand, Mr. Steinbeck has summoned all his resources to make the reader feel his human relationship with the family of dispossessed farmers; yet the result of this, too, is not quite real. The characters of *The Grapes of Wrath* are animated and put through their paces rather than brought to life; they are like excellent character actors giving very conscientious performances in a fairly well-written play. Their dialect is well managed, but they always sound a little stogy, and in spite of the

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happy people it must be that turns for happiness here." The most serious criticism leveled against American civilization is not that its work is standardized and its business engulfing but that its pleasures are mechanical and its leisure slavish. It is not that we have not time. Foreign observers are repeatedly astonished at the number of hours an ever increasing number of Americans have to themselves. It is not time we lack but leisure.

Leisure is indeed an affair of mood and atmosphere rather than simply of the clock. It is not a chronological occurrence but a spiritual state. It is unhampered pleasurable living among one's native enthusiasms. Leisure consists of those pauses in our lives when experience is a fusion of stimulation and repose. Genuine leisure yields at once a feeling of vividness and a sense of peace. It consists of moments so clear and pleasant in themselves that one might wish they were eternal.

For traveled Americans at least, the best illustrations and memories of such experiences will come from abroad. For one it will be the recollection of keen but casual conversation at tea on a lawn in Sussex or Surrey. For another it will be the image of two friends chatting over coffee and liquors at an old cafe on a boulevard in Paris. Another will remember a stroll in an Italian piazza or the long, dignified peace of an evening in a London club.

It is not that one cannot find domestic images, too, of a quality of leisure that seems to be passing almost completely out of the American scene. Many a middle aged American in the midst of a life crowded with social as well as business or professional obligations will recall some rare hour that in its golden and gratuitous irrelevance seems to belong not in the realm of time but in the careless length of eternity: an afternoon spent browsing without purpose in a library or walking without the thought of time or destination on the quiet windings of an unfrequented country road. One recalls conversations lightly begun after dinner and meandering through wreaths of smoke into unexpected depths and intensities until long after an unnoted midnight. One remembers some incredibly remote year when one wrote by hand a letter that flowed on as if ink and paper and ideas would never end.

But for Americans the word leisure has distinctively Old World associations. That is partly because some Americans have there known it best. Cut off from the pressure and compulsions of their normal occupations at home they have moved



down to being silly. Between the foolish and the funeral we have managed to find no middle course.

Of escapes from the pressure of an increasingly mechanized life to occasional outbursts of excitement or triviality there is much to be said. At least it may be said for them that they are natural, perhaps needful, refuges from a world whose tightly woven days would otherwise be unbearable. It is perhaps a sad commentary on the angular and constricted lives we lead that we should have to seek lurid or futile ways to escape. But it is not to be wondered at that, living in such a world of routine, we should plunge ever so often into the loud nonsense of insane parties, wallow in the absurd pathos and comedy of the screen, or fall enraptured victims to successive crazes of footless puzzles and dull games. We may be forgiven our excursions to musical comedies without wit or music, and conversational evenings without humanity or ideas. The temporary citizen is vexed beyond his own realization by the humdrum unthrilling pressure of his days; he craves naturally now and then an opportunity to be trivial, irresponsible, and absurd.

But the irony of our situation lies in the fact that even when we try to escape into triviality or foolishness we make a serious and standardized business of it. One can pardon occasional madness in a sober civilization, but there is something pathetic, almost ghastly, in soberly making madness a routine. The half-drunken gaiety that has become the accompaniment of much respectable social life is a sad determined business. Orgy has become a social obligation, dissipation a prescription to the weary, the repressed, and the disenchanting. It becomes as much a social obligation to play a new game or have a new thrill as to read a new book or wear a current collar or hat. Any number of nice people go systematically about becoming on occasion trivial, foolish, or mad. It is as if the American could not stop being efficient when he wanted to, and had to be gay or trivial or ecstatic with the same thoroughness and strained energy with which he might build a business or a skyscraper.

There are other reasons besides our own solemn efficiency that have been transforming our attempts to amuse ourselves into pale and standardized routines. The same forces that have gone into the big business of providing our necessities have gone into the big business of providing our amusements. One may glamorously state the possibilities of the radio, the universal music and distinguished thought. One

with freedom amid the grace of a leisurely tradition. But there is a deeper reason which lies in the contrast between that European tradition and our own. The quality of leisure in Europe is partly the heritage of a long leisure-class tradition, partly the patience of peoples that have the sense of age and are not obsessed with hastening toward the new and building the possible in a hurry. In our own civilization originally and in spirit partly pioneer there is a working rather than a leisure-class tradition and the impress and atmosphere of work have come to control our lives even when we are not working. To be busy has been with us a primary virtue and even our play has had to find a place for itself as a kind of business.

A number of years ago Professor Veblen in his "Theory of the Leisure Class" tried to point out how the traditions and interests of a leisure class had shaped our tastes and our morals. A quite plausible volume might be written on the thesis that the pursuit of leisure in our civilization is determined by our traditions of work: we carry the morals and ideals of an essentially industrial essentially business civilization over into our play. Leisure—a quiet and emancipated absorption in things and doings for their own sake—has always seemed to us effeminate and exotic. We wish leisure for relief for release for escape for instruction enlightenment or advancement. There is something immoral about moments that are good in themselves. There is probably no other country in the world where idleness is one of the deadly sins.

With us therefore leisure has been a melodramatic escape into self improvement. We oscillate between night clubs and outlines of culture. Every one has at some time or other been present at a determinedly gay party. He has seen ordinarily quiet intelligent people become wilfully noisy and stupid. He has seen men and women separately delightful and entertaining prance about loudly screaming vulgarities acting the grown up babies of the age. And his pain has been increased by a sense that none of these people cared to do the silly things they were doing. They drank more than they really wished to and uttered hiccoughing nonsense that they themselves despised.

Every one likewise has listened to a group of people at dinner or afterwards talk with obligatory boredom about the *modish* books and plays and ideas. Spontaneity which is of the essence of any truly spiritual life flies out of the conversation and out of the window when culture becomes deliberate. We settle down as grimly to being serious as we *sable*

and to being silly. Between the foolish and the funereal we have managed to find no middle course.

Of escapes from the pressure of an increasingly mechanized life to occasional outbursts of excitement or triviality there is much to be said. At least it may be said for them that they are natural perhaps needful refuges from a world whose night, seven days would otherwise be unbearable. It is perhaps a sad commentary on the angular and constricted lives we lead that we should have to seek lurid or futile ways to protest. But it is not to be wondered at that living in such a world of routine we should plunge ever so often into the loud nonsense of mass parties, wallow in the absurd pathos and comedy of the screen, or fall enraptured victims to successive crises of footless puzzles and dull games. We may be forgiven our excursions to musical comedies without wit or music and conversely, at evenings without humanity or ideas. The contemporary citizen vexed beyond his own realization by the humdrum unthrilling pressure of his days, he craves naturally now and then an opportunity to be trivial irresponsible and absurd.

But the irony of our situation lies in the fact that even when we try to escape into triviality or foolishness we make a serious and standardized business of it. One can pardon occasional madness in a sober civilization but there is something pathetic almost ghastly in soberly making madness a routine. The half-drunken gaiety that has become the accompaniment of much respectable social life is a sad determined business. Orgy has become a social obligation, dissipation a prescription to the weary the repressed and the disenchanted. It becomes as much a social obligation to play a new game or have a new thrill as to read a new book or wear a current collar or hat. Any number of "nice" people go systematically about becoming on occasion trivial foolish or mad. It is as if the American could stop being efficient when he wanted to and had to be gay or trivial or ecstatic with the same thoroughness and strained energy with which he might build a business or a skyscraper.

There are other reasons besides our own solemn efficiency that have been interfering with our attempts to amuse ourselves into pale and mindless routines. The same forces that have gone into the big business of providing our necessities have gone into the big business of providing our amusements. One may glamorously state the possibilities of the radio, the universalization of beautiful music and distinguished thought. One

with freedom amid the grace of a leisurely tradition. But there is a deeper reason which lies in the contrast between that European tradition and our own. The quality of leisure in Europe is partly the heritage of a long leisure-class tradition, partly the patience of peoples that have the sense of age and are not obsessed with hastening toward the new and building the possible in a hurry. In our own civilization, originally and in spirit partly pioneer, there is a working rather than a leisure-class tradition, and the impress and atmosphere of work have come to control our lives even when we are not working. To be busy has been with us a primary virtue, and even our play has had to find a place for itself as a kind of business.

A number of years ago Professor Veblen in his "Theory of the Leisure Class" tried to point out how the traditions and interests of a leisure class had shaped our tastes and our morals. A quite plausible volume might be written on the thesis that the pursuit of leisure in our civilization is determined by our traditions of work: we carry the morals and ideals of an essentially industrial, essentially business civilization over into our play. Leisure—a quiet and emancipated absorption in things and doings for their own sake—has always seemed to us effeminate and exotic. We wish leisure for relief, for release, for escape, for instruction, enlightenment, or advancement. There is something immoral about moments that are good in themselves. There is probably no other country in the world where idleness is one of the deadly sins.

With us, therefore, leisure has been a melodramatic escape into self-improvement. We oscillate between night clubs and outlines of culture. Every one has at some time or other been present at a determinedly gay party. He has seen ordinarily quiet, intelligent people become wilfully noisy and stupid. He has seen men and women separately delightful and entertaining prance about loudly screaming vulgarities, acting the grown-up babies of the age. And his pain has been increased by a sense that none of these people cared to do the silly things they were doing. They drank more than they really wished to and uttered hiccoughing nonsense that they themselves despised.

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may talk as one will about the possible high art of the moving picture marvel as one will at the new mechanical perfections of the phonograph. There is no question but that these are at their best mechanical. They turn our leisure into a passive receptivity of standard mediocre amusement. They provide almost nothing of that spontaneous sense of individual living which is part of the repose and stimulation of leisure. It is not pleasant to realize that our leisure is taking on the color—or colorlessness—of the rest of our lives, that we are becoming stereotypes in our play as in our work. The most serious spiritual danger of the Industrial Revolution is that it has come to mechanize and industrialize not merely things but the spirit as well.

When a man is at leisure we like to say he is free to be himself, but if his freedom consists in efficiently amusing himself according to the standard formulas or subjecting himself to the passive reception of standard amusements, he is not free at all.

But while leisure has in one direction gone toward conventional amusement and stereotyped triviality, in another direction it has become a kind of elegant overtime work. The latest use we have found for leisure is to make it useful. Its usefulness, which might have been supposed to be that it was a good in itself, has been transformed into its possibility as a means of systematic self-improvement. Correspondence courses, outlines of knowledge, scrapbooks of learning—agencies not always disinterested—have been trying to teach us what we might do with our unharnessed moments if only we would harness them. A little less carousal and a little less bridge, and we might become heirs to all of Western culture, or experts in philosophy or French. There is a revealing irrelevance in the reasons assigned for turning the casual moments of our lives to the pursuit of knowledge. It is not that knowledge will render us self-possessed and whole, that it will give wings to our imagination and give a larger, clearer, and sweeter horizon to our lives. It is that knowledge, or a smattering of it, will make us successful or respected, that a veneer of garbled French will reveal our breeding, or a parade of the names of philosophers testify to our intellectual curiosity. There is possibly no clearer index to the remoteness of a native American culture than the eager indiscriminate voracity with which Americans gobble up tabloid versions of fields of expert knowledge. Far from meaning that we have turned to the love of wisdom, it means that we have turned our idle hours into the hurried

business of getting short cuts to knowledge. Outlines simply are a way of applying efficiency to culture as well as to business. Their very essence is to say that here is all philosophy or history or literature for those who have not the patience or sympathy to explore any corner of any of them with disinterested delight. Worst of all, they have taken from leisure its saving essence—the sense of doing some lovely thing for its own lovable sake.

There are aristocratic pessimists in our midst who hold that leisure in the sense of a fine spontaneous use of free time is increasingly impossible in America. They point to the facts cited in the foregoing and to other equally distressing social habits. The omnipresence of the automobile is not simply a temptation to literal speed, but has come to be a symbol for speed in spiritual matters as well. The only excitement in any activity even in the pursuit of truth, is the excitement of going fast. It is for that reason they insist, that there is no country where ideas become popular so fast as in America, no country where half learned they are so quickly outmoded and forgotten. A book is the book of a month or at most a season, and the rapid transit reader comes to forswear books for the reviews of them and forswear reviews for excerpts from them in a synthetic magazine.

It is pointed out again, and with justice, that the multiplication of physical luxuries and physical distractions is a constant intruder upon that collectedness of spirit in which alone leisure can come in being. Serenity and integrity are menaced as much by the telephone as by any single invention of the last century. Long quiet waves of time have become almost impossible in evenings shattered by radios by movies, and by the constant seduction and noise of the automobile. Speculation begins in a dreaming fantasy meditation in reverie. In our contemporary urban world one almost never has a chance to achieve that half-drowsy detachment in which fantasy and reverie begin. We are kept too wide awake ever to be really in peace or in thought. Finally in a country where there is still a glamorous sense of unlimited opportunity the desire for first place makes almost impossible that freedom and detachment, which leave one free to follow an impulse for its own self-rewarding delight.

The desire for speed the desire for luxury the desire for first place—these are indeed three deadly enemies of leisure. In the current movement of American life there is not much

prospect of radically overcoming them. But there are portents of a change in our point of view that may portend a radical change in our practice.

There are growing evidences of a hunger for quiet and unhurried living among an increasing number of Americans. One cannot—nor would one—abolish the telephone or the automobile. There is no use in sighing for an anachronistic Paradise. It is impossible to transform life in New York in the twentieth century into the retirement of a rectory in Kent in the eighteenth. One cannot in the noise and hurry of a Western metropolitan winter pretend one is living in the timeless unconcern of an Eastern tropical island.

But part of our difficulty lies not in the impossibility of our circumstances but in the blindness of our philosophy. If we once learned to rediscover the values of quiet spaces in our lives we should find a way to find them. There is time to be had even in New York or Chicago and solitude even among crowds. One need not follow Thoreau into the wilderness to practice his isolation nor Buddha into the desert to achieve his meditation. There is peace in a city apartment if one will but stay at home an evening to find it and Nirvana to be found at home in one's own mind.

Ultimately the lack of leisure is lack of spiritual integration. We flee to society, dull though it be, through the fear of the greater dullness of being alone. We hurtle along at a break-neck speed physically and spiritually for fear of the drabness and futility we might feel if we slowed down. Any number of people are suddenly becoming aware of that situation and honest with themselves are beginning to realize how much leisure one might have if one had enough faith in one's own resources. One need not let life be shattered into a splintered busyness by a routine absorption into social evenings which give one a standard good time. The rediscovery of solitude is being made by Americans and with that rediscovery come many other delightful things: the chance to do nothing at all, not even talk, and the chance out of that interlude to follow a fancy or meditate a dream. Many a good citizen, given a chance to be alone with himself for an evening, might discover for the first time the quality of his own character, the contours of taste and interest that make him a personality as well as a jobholder and taxpayer. In such an interval a man may discover a hobby that will be for him a substitute for creative genius. He may not paint, write, or compose, but he

may learn to do something indelibly himself and make something incredibly his own.

But in the golden days of leisure in the spacious and graceful society of the Renaissance or the English country house obviously men and women did not retire into their own souls away from the stimulation of other people. Good conversation is certainly one of the most enlivening ways of leisure and is certainly on of the most enlivening ways of leisure and good conversation is something between solemnity and absurdity. In America, of late we have had to choose between talking on subjects solemnly and schematically or babbling nonsense doing anything rather than talk. We are I think, beginning to learn again the joy of conversation, a light and easy play of minds and tempers over common human themes. We have grown a little weary of talk that is all smart and burnished we have grown tired too of talk that sounds like the overflow program of a literary club. We are learning again that the meeting of minds and moods is one of the sweetest and most amiable fruits of human society. It has its own novelties and excitements no less than the automobile radio and bridge.

Not but that these last have their own special value as the pure gold of leisure. Even the mania for speed has about it something of the quality of poetry. No one who on some moonlight night has sped along a country road will deny the sheer poetical appeal there is in the ease and freedom of speed. But the automobile has made the more peaceful kind of leisure possible as it never was before. It has brought the city dweller within easy reach of green and solitude. It has made neighbors of involuntary hermits. The radio too for all its blare of tawdry music has put millions within the reach of formerly impossible musical beauty. It has brought Beethoven to the farmer and to apartment dwellers who could never be lured to Carnegie Hall. And bridge snuffed out by the cultured moralist, has its own justification. It is a diverting and harmless adventure of the mind and has for its devotees its own glories of wonder and conflict and surprise. If all these things are less interesting ultimately than conversation it is because we are social minds rather than aleatory machines.

There is paradoxically enough an incredible romanticism in our efficient impatience with leisure. We chase as madly as any early nineteenth-century German poet the Blue Flower of Happiness always beyond the hill. It is for that reason that we cannot take our idleness for the happiness it is we try to

turn it into an instrument toward the happiness it may bring. It may bring all knowledge into our province or all salaries into our reach. It is for that reason that we have turned to outlines of knowledge and courses in success. But here too a change in spirit is notable.

There are men one knows who have made the surprised and delighted discovery that it is possible if not to become hastily omniscient at least to become patiently at home in some small field of knowledge or some tiny technic or art. It is not easy or particularly joyous to go into the whole vague history of mankind but it is possible with pleasure to know one period or one decade of American history or the story of one man or one movement. Only an octogenarian genius can master the whole of comparative literature but any one can carve out a little pathway of poetry or prose make one author one genre one theme his own be it Trollope or sonnets whaling or ballades. It is not possible for every man to be an artist but almost any one can learn to draw or model to play an instrument or plant a garden. In England one meets omniscient people no more than in America nor are artists in every lane. But there are thousands of unpretentious lawyers or business men who have made some intimate little field of knowledge or thought their own or learned to do one modest small hobby well.

We may talk much about the future of America and think to measure its destiny by statistics of its educational economic or political changes. But the outlook for our country lies in the quality of its idleness almost as much as anything else.

Shall we then always alternate between trivial escapes into foolishness and solemn plunges into exploitation of our moments of repose? For us as for Aristotle there must be a golden mean. We may learn still to be at peace long enough to think and dream after our own fashion. We may learn to be together and be gay without being rowdy. We may learn to be expert in some little territory of art or thought or science without losing the amateur touch. We may still find time to live rather than time to kill.

If we do we shall have learned what the spiritual life really means. For it means nothing more than those moments in experience when we have some free glint of life for its own sake some lovely unforced glimmer of laughter or reason or love.

## BERNARD DE VOTO

BERNARD AUGUSTINE DE VOTO was born in Ogden, Utah in 1897 to a father of Italian descent and a mother of Mormon and pioneer background. Army service during the first world war as a lieutenant drilling recruits in marksmanship was followed by a bachelor's degree at Harvard in 1920. Honorary degrees have been conferred on him by Middlebury and Kenyon Colleges, the University of Colorado and North Western. He has been a member of the faculty of Northwestern and Harvard Universities. Many of his stories, historical articles, essays and reviews have been published in many magazines. He was for two or three years editor of the *Harvard Graduate Magazine* and for another two or three years editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature* and he is now a member of the editorial board of the *New England Quarterly*. Since 1933 he has occupied "The Easy Chair" of *Harvard Magazine*. He was general editor of the series of books issued as *Americana Deserta*. His own volumes which total nearly a score of titles are a varied array. Novels published in the decade 1924-1934 include *The Cooked Mill*, *The Chriot of Fire* and *We Accept with Pleasure*. Biographies include *Black Twa n s America* (1932) and *Black Twa n s World* (1942). A more general study of American literary history and criticism, *The Literary Fallacy* (1944) was preceded by a historical study *The Year of Deceit in 1846* (1943). In 1935 he published *The Course of Empire*. Among the ranks of critical and literary historians he has been a vigorous controversialist and a storm center. Two volumes of essays have been included in his output *Forays and Rebutals* (1936) and *Minority Report* (1940). As John August he has published thrillers, spy stories and murder mysteries. The accompanying selection is taken from *Minority Report*.

## Seed Corn and Mistletoe

No one can approach through winter darkness a house from whose windows light shines out on the snow without feeling quieted and heartened. Psychic subtleties may be active in such a response but there is no need to invoke them for the obvious facts provide all the explanation we require. A house means warmth and shelter, light means human society. Snow

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and the dark have simplified the detail of the picture and deadened sound—they suggest tranquility which may mean much at the end of the day and food or drink for restoration, and the talk of friends or family. The human mind is addicted to symbolism and here is an image of ease, comfort, and reassurance that speaks directly to us in early childhood and from then on. It is likely that very few people seeing a light on snow and quickening to the thought of warmth within pause to inquire whether the warmth comes from a gas furnace controlled by a thermostat or from the hickory logs burning on a spacious hearth to which a poetic sense would more properly attribute it. The light shining on the snow is quite as beautiful and quite as heartening when power to furnish it has been carried along a hundred miles of copper wire and stepped down through a transformer as when it comes from a candle dipped by hand.

Somewhere here is a text for a sermon and sermons are appropriate to Christmas time though with the clergy currently talking about a planned economy which will plow them under altogether they may have to be preached by laymen. And everything about Christmas fares badly among the cerebral who deplore its clearly reactionary nature mutter about its vulgarization by trade and commerce protest against its evil effects on children and complain that it isn't what it used to be anyway and never can be again. Let us deal with these indignations first for though the cerebral are always running a slight temperature on logical grounds if the winter festival does indeed constitute a menace to society even a lay pulpit should take notice of it.

About the children. There are no statistical tables to tell how many of them are still being deceived with an old and probably capitalistic myth called Santa Claus. Probably millions of them for the mass of mankind has a gratifying disregard of theory and parents continue in spite of the heroic labors of educational psychologists to deceive their children because they themselves were deceived a generation ago remember liking it and observe that their children like it too. The myth offends both a moral theory which holds that it is wrong to lie to children about anything and a highly scientific one which holds that you must not confuse a child's sense of reality by adding to his difficulty in dealing with real things the further difficulty of dealing with the altogether fictitious. Yet everyone knows that a child's sense of reality

incommensurable with an adult and that children will make up phantasies of their own to supply the lack of any that may not be given them by others. The people who object to lying to children about Santa Claus must perforce lie to them about all the daily phenomena of existence if indeed it is possible to say what a lie to a child is. And the very people who object to Santa Claus as a myth are prone to instruct them in such conceptions as human brotherhood justice and the classless society.

Both objections are on the level of the nostalgia which feels that the festival was all right for children when they themselves strung popcorn and cranberries to make decorations for the tree instead of the machine made tinsel of to-day (but if that was Group Participation was it not also Child Labor?) and that colored electric lights are tawdry whereas little candles once had a simple purity—it apparently being all right to burn the house up on Christmas Day so long as you keep the festival simple and pure. This is on the same level with that other sentiment of the thoughtful which sets out to make war impossible along with racketeering and unfair competition by keeping toy guns cannon and lead soldiers out of the hands of children. Beat the toy sword into a toy steam shovel the notion goes and you will turn the child forever to the ways of peace at whatever cost of overproduction in the heavy industries. But if you do not permit the normal war like phantasies of the child a normal expression at the right time you head straight for trouble. Either you will render him unfit for normal aggression later on thus making him an easy prey for the combative or you will insure such phantasies getting an abnormal and delayed expression, thus making war inevitable.

The unregarding behavior of untheoretical people is certainly sounder. They act on an assumption that the important thing is to make children happy. If you can give a child an experience of authentic awe and wonder and anticipation by telling him that a mythical fat man with a kind heart brings presents to children why the thing that counts is giving him the experience. If children like to play with toy guns who is harmed? And if a child catches his breath in ecstasy because here in the living room stands an evergreen that has blossomed with colored lights why that is everything in itself. You have given the child an experience of ecstasy which needs neither justification nor analysis on logical principles.

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less a good deal less than ideal but the principal one the one without which none of the others could possibly operate is the human warmth of friends and relatives seeking expression and finding it Christmas may be commercialized till it has become indispensable to the business system and vulgarized till a sensitive theory shudders when dealing with it, but people go on making gifts to those who are dear to them The custom has the natural force of a stream flowing and takes its curve as a stream does from its own nature It is the popular (ulfilment of human need and desire The people behave that way and you can do nothing whatever about them

That is the firstly of a lay sermon The secondly goes on to point out how though in the American Christmas are recognizable many elements taken from many places the whole is something altogether in its own terms Our Christmas Eve is English and our Christmas morning looks very German The carols sung in our churches and streets (and to advertise soap or engine oil in our broadcasting studios a native touch probably loathsome to the sensitive) come from all over Europe but are French to a functional anthropologist and medieval French at that A good many of the conventional symbols are Asiatic and the firecrackers which children set off in San Francisco and New Orleans exorcise demons and propitiate gods that are clearly Chinese The mistletoe Norse and a vigilant suspicion bubbling in the blood of pagans dog can detect compulsions observing the holly and the egg are used to commemorate Yes a hodgepodge of rituals and symbols and of beliefs gathered at random but it has taken a shape of its own which no one who has experienced it can ever possibly confuse with any other Christmas One who has known the American Christmas as a child a lover or a parent knows a festival which has shaped his thought and patterns of emotion lying far deeper than thought in a way uniquely of own In whatever corner of the earth he may find himself Christmas Eve the rhythms pulsing in his nerves and the images translating them will have reference to the common and unique experience of Americans That remembered remembrance child seeing the filled stocking and the lighted tree hearing a Catholic carol so illogically sung in a Congregational meeting house hurrying to deliver a holly wreath to a friend of his parents in order to try his skates the sooner on the ice of country pond or city sidewalks—is set off from all children in things remembered and thus

One is constrained to be equally skeptical of the indignation that sees Christmas as a conspiracy against the public peace and interest by people who have Christmas presents to sell. Like so many other causes of the cerebral this presents itself as a benevolent championship of the exploited whereas it is really a contempt of the common man. It is the old old cry of Utopians: the people are fools. The people that is are weak gullible infatuated unstable venal too foolish to follow after righteousness—give us machine guns and we will make them virtuous. A cerebral dictatorship ever so kindly but quite firm would safeguard them from exploitation by the hucksters defend them from the seductions of advertising deliver them from the pumped up hysteria of crowds. How pitiful that they should give one another presents because the department store tells them to how intolerable that the System should make money from a sentiment that the people only think they feel! See how mechanically the common man jerks about on his wire and how slavishly he does what he is told to do by conspirators in the service of commerce. Therefore let us save him from himself teach him that his emotions are not his own and deliver him into self knowledge and emancipation—at the point of a bayonet. A lay pulpit must denounce all this fervor as propaganda—fascist or communist whichever epithet will most affront the kindly theorist. It is an ancient despair uttering an ancient cry: the lust of the fretted to save the people by force. The people should ignore it altogether.

As of course they do. They go on giving one another presents at Christmas time no matter how the profits of the hucksters may pile up. They spend as much as they can afford to and usually a good deal more. If trade prospers and the banks can express Christmas in the form of graphs the public is not appalled. Nor is its feeling degraded. The cathedrals of the age of faith which the theories treat with the greatest respect were fenced round by the booths of traders and an earlier Christianity managed to combine a good deal of commerce with its devotion—and the roads to the American camp meeting were thronged with peddlers whom the devout patronized without in the least diminishing their pious exercises. Not the trading booths but the devotion was the important thing about the cathedrals and the important thing about Christmas is not that the people are sold presents but that they give them to one another. The most diverse and even the most irrelevant motives may enter in many of them doubt-

less a good deal less than ideal but the principal one the one without which none of the others could possibly operate is the human warmth of friends and relatives seeking expression and finding it Christmas may be commercialized till it has become indispensable to the business system and vulgarized till a sensitive theory shudders when dealing with it but people go on making gifts to those who are dear to them The custom has the natural force of a stream flowing and takes its curve as a stream does from its own nature It is the popular fulfillment of human need and desire The people behave that way and you can do nothing whatever about them

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American tradition different from all other traditions has created its own symbols

There are ■ good many like them and a lay preacher would call them into remembrance at Christmas a time dedicated from its origin to remembering the justifications of hopefulness and disregarding the foundations of despair Autumn comes and the President of the United States summons the nation to render formal thanks for its harvest and lesser magistrates repeat his proclamation Meanwhile at half the farm doorways in New England pumpkins stand on the stoop a splash of color against the dulling landscape though no one can explain the custom In rural places across the continent boys nail on the barn door the tails of woodchucks and chipmunks and red squirrels they have shot beside them and on the walls of garages in the towns their fathers add last year's automobile-license plates to the column of those that have gone before Seed corn hangs in bunches on the wall that gets the sun and the corn is shocked The corn is shocked to dry and so ■ the wheat and the form and structure of the shocking are peculiar to the United States We shock our corn differently and the image also calls up associations unique to Americans for it is part of an intricate organization of skills and customs and emotions of social beliefs and relationships of a way of living with and in society that is our own way and no one else's A live symbol to Americans and one whose meaning is beyond the instinct and out of the comprehension of all other people

A symbol of an American way of life Let it be remembered at Christmas time and with ■ a great company of its kind, since Christmas is a time for symbols Light shining on snow through winter dark is as universal as the star going before the Wise Men on their way but also to all who have lived in America it has a special reference being as well the light from a cabin in the clearing with the forest beyond them stretching toward the unknown West Few Americans now have ever lived in a cabin or ever seen a clearing in the forest, yet the words mean something to them that they mean to no one else on earth Fewer still have ever ridden in a stagecoach climbing toward Cumberland Gap or plodded beside a canvas covered wagon toward the land where the streams sink out of sight with Indians possibly crouching behind the next rise It is a long time since a mythical Indian princess interceded for a probably lying Captain John Smith none of us has driven the *Sovereign of the Seas* round the Horn to beat the

clipper fleet none of us has ridden down the Natchez Trace or forced to plow for the first time through matted grass roots to prairie soil. Andrew Jackson and Abe Lincoln and Buffalo Bill and Daniel Boone are dead. Huck Finn is only someone in a book and Paul Bunyan is not even that but only talk sleepy at best and now no longer uttered. But though none of us ever saw the Wise Men coming from the East we still make gifts to our friends and children on Christmas Day. And the cabin in the clearing the clipper fleet the departed heroes and the corn standing in shocks are systolic in us part of the rhythm of our breath and of our desire—and part too of our fate. They stand for our own way of life they are our living tradition and we understand them being shaped by them and being inescapably obedient to them and no one else understands them. That is the way our corn is shocked.

That may as well be remembered at Christmas time at Christmas time especially in a period of tribulation. The ceremonial—people characterized primarily by fear and by contempt of the unconsidered multitudes and by a lust for absolutes and for absolute power—tell us that America must choose between two ways of life both European both essentially the same both intolerable. Let there be read to them the prayer appointed to be read in churches on Christmas Day they are fools and liars and the truth is not in them. That is not our choice but an alien one and our choice is foreordained for us by our own tradition our native way of life formed by our own systole and diastole. Our corn is maize and Europe had no maize.

## E B WHITE

E B WHITE was born in Mt. Vernon, N. Y., in 1899. His college education at Cornell was interrupted by army service but he returned to the university and received a degree in 1921. After graduation he became a reporter on the *Seattle Times*, then worked his way to Alaska as mess boy on a ship. Returned to New York, he became production assistant in an advertising agency. Here he began sending to *The New Yorker* the contributions that led to his joining the magazine's staff. For many years he wrote most of the opening "Talk of the Town" columns. In 1929 he married Katharine Sargeant Angell, literary editor of *The New Yorker*. From 1938 to 1943 he wrote a monthly department for *Harper's Magazine*. He now divides his time between New York and his farm in Maine. He has received honorary doctoral degrees in letters from Dartmouth, Maine, Yale, Bowdoin, Hamilton, Harvard, and Colby. His volumes of verse include *The Lady Is Cold* (1929) and *The Fox of Peapack* (1938). With James Thurber he wrote *Is Sex Necessary?* (1929), *Every Day Is Saturday* (1934), *Quo V' dimus?* or *The Case for the Bicycle* (1939), *The Wild Flag* (1946), and *The Second Tree from the Corner* (1943) are collections of his stories, essays, satirical sketches, and wry editorial comments. *Here Is New York* (1949) is a sensitive and perceptive record of what the metropolis has meant to him. With his wife he edited *A Subtreasury of American Humor* (1941). He has also written books for children: *Stuart Little* (1945) and *Charlotte's Web* (1952). *One Man's Meat* (1942), a collection of thoughtful and witty essays which first appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, received a Limited Edition Club Gold Medal as the book most likely to attain the stature of a classic. The following selection is taken from this book. The piece was first published in July 1940.

### Freedom

I HAVE often noticed on my trips up to the city that people have recut their clothes to follow the fashion. On my last trip, however, it seemed to me that people had remodeled their ideas too—taken in their convictions a little at the waist, shortened the sleeves of their resolve, and fitted themselves out in a new intellectual ensemble copied from a smart design.

out of the very latest page of history. It seemed to me they had strung along with Paris a little too long.

I confess to a disturbed stomach. I feel sick when I find anyone adjusting his mind to the new tyranny which is succeeding abroad. Because of its fundamental structures fascism does not seem to me to admit of any compromise or any rationalization, and I resent the patronizing air of persons who find in my plain belief in freedom a sign of immaturity. If it is boyish to believe that a human being should live free then I'll gladly arrest my development and let the rest of the world grow up.

I shall report some of the strange remarks I heard in New York. One man told me that he thought perhaps the Nazi ideal was a sounder ideal than our constitutional system because have you ever noticed what fine alert young faces the young German soldiers have in the newsreel? He added: Our American youngsters spend all their time at the movies—they're a mess. That was his summation of the case, his interpretation of the new Europe. Such a remark leaves me pale and shaken. If it represents the peak of our intelligence then the steady march of despotism will not receive any considerable setback at our shores.

Another man informed me that our democratic notion of popular government was decadent and not worth bothering about—because England is really rotten and the industrial towns there are a disgrace. That was the only reason he gave for the hopelessness of democracy and he seemed mightily pleased with himself as though he were more familiar than most with the anatomy of decadence and had detected subtler aspects of the situation than were discernible to the rest of us.

Another man assured me that anyone who took any kind of government seriously was a gullible fool. You could be sure he said that there is nothing but corruption because of the way Clemenceau acted at Versailles. He said it didn't make any difference really about this war. It was just another war. Having relieved himself of this majestic bit of reasoning he subsided.

Another individual discovering signs of zeal creeping into my blood berated me for having lost my detachment. My pure skeptical point of view, He announced that he wasn't going to be swept away by all this nonsense but would prefer to remain in the role of innocent bystander which he said was the duty of any intelligent person. (I noticed, that he

phoned later to qualify his remark as though he had lost some of his innocence in the cab on the way home )

Those are just a few samples of the sort of talk that seemed to be going round—talk which was full of defeatism and disillusion and sometimes of a too studied innocence. Men are not merely annihilating themselves at a great rate these days, but they are telling one another enormous lies grandiose fibs. Such remarks as I heard are fearfully disturbing in their cumulative effect. They are more destructive than dive bombers and mine fields for they challenge not merely one's immediate position but one's main defenses. They seemed to me to issue either from persons who could never have really come to grips with freedom so as to understand her or from renegades. Where I expected to find indignation I found paralysis or a sort of dim acquiescence as in a child who is duly swallowing a distasteful pill. I was advised of the growing anti Jewish sentiment by a man who seemed to be watching the phenomenon of intolerance not through tears of shame but with a clear intellectual gaze as through a well ground lens.

The least a man can do at such a time is to declare himself and tell where he stands. I believe in freedom with the same burning delight the same faith the same intense abandon which attended its birth on this continent more than a century and a half ago. I am writing my declaration rapidly much as though I were shaving to catch a train. Events abroad give a man a feeling of being pressed for time. Actually I do not believe I am pressed for time and I apologize to the reader for a false impression that may be created. I just want to tell before I get slowed down that I am in love with freedom and that it is an affair of long standing and that it is a fine state to be in and that I am deeply suspicious of people who are beginning to adjust to fascism and dictators merely because they are succeeding in war. From such adaptable natures a smell rises. I pinch my nose.

For as long as I can remember I have had a sense of living somewhat freely in a natural world. I don't mean I enjoyed freedom of action but my existence seemed to have the quality of free ness. I traveled with secret papers pertaining to a divine conspiracy. Intuitively I've always been aware of the vitally important pact which a man has with himself to be all things to himself and to be identified with all things to stand self reliant, taking advantage of his haphazard connection with a planet, riding his luck and following his bent with the tenacity of a hound. My first and greatest love affair

war with this thing we call freedom this lady of infinite allure  
this dangerous and beautiful and sublime being who restores  
and supplies us all

It began with the haunting intimation (which I presume  
every child receives) of his mystical inner life of God in  
man of nature publishing herself through the I This elusive  
sensation is moving and memorable It comes early in life  
a boy we'll say sitting on the front steps on a summer night,  
thinking of nothing in particular suddenly hearing as with  
a new perception and as though for the first time the pulsing  
sound of crickets overwhelmed with the novel sense of identi-  
fication with the natural company of insects and grass and  
night, conscious of a faint answering cry to the universal per-  
plexing question What is I? Or a little girl returning from  
the grave of a pet bird leaning with her elbows on the window  
sill inhaling the unfamiliar draught of death suddenly seeing  
herself as part of the complete story Or to an older youth  
encountering for the first time a great teacher who by some  
chance word or mood awakens something and the youth  
beginning to breathe as an individual and conscious of strength  
in his vitals I think the sensation must develop in many in a  
as a feeling of identity with God—an eruption of the spirit  
caused by allergies and the sense of divine existence as distinct  
from mere animal existence This is the beginning of the affair  
with freedom

But a man's free condition is of two parts the instinctive  
free next he experiences as an animal dweller on a planet, and  
the practical liberties he enjoys as a privileged member of  
human society The latter is of the two more generally under-  
stood more widely admired and apparently challenged and  
discussed It is the practical and apparent side of freedom  
The United States almost alone today offers the liberties  
and the privileges and the tools of freedom. In this land the  
citizens are still invited to write plays and books to paint their  
pictures to meet for discussion, to dissent as well as to agree  
in all subjects without censorship to hold court and judge  
one another to compose music to talk politics with their neigh-  
bors without wondering whether the secret police are listening  
to exchange ideas as well as goods to kid the government  
when it needs kidding and to read real news of real events  
instead of phony news manufactured by a paid agent of the  
state This is a fact and should give every person pause  
To be free in a planetary sense is to feel that you belong

to earth To be free in a social sense is to feel at home in a democratic framework In Adolph Hitler although he is a freely flowering individual we do not detect either type of sensibility From reading his book I gather that his feeling for earth is not a sense of communion but a driving urge to prevail His feeling for men is not that they co-exist, but that they are capable of being arranged and standardized by a superior intellect—that their existence suggests not a fulfillment of their personalities but a submersion of their personalities in the common racial destiny His very great absorption in the destiny of the German people somehow loses some of its effect when you discover from his writings in what vast contempt he holds all people I learned he wrote

“to gain an insight into the unbelievably primitive opinions and arguments of the people To him the ordinary man is a primitive capable only of being used and led He speaks continually of people as sheep halfwits and impudent fools—the same people from whom he asks the utmost in loyalty and to whom he promises the ultimate in prizes

Here in America where our society is based on belief in the individual not contempt for him the free principle of life has a chance of surviving I believe that it must and will survive To understand freedom is an accomplishment which all men may acquire who set their minds in that direction and to love freedom is a tendency which many Americans are born with To live in the same room with freedom or in the same hemisphere is still a profoundly shaking experience for me

One of the earliest truths (and to him most valuable) that the author of *Mein Kampf* discovered was that it is not the written word but the spoken word which in heated moments moves great masses of people to noble or ignoble action The written word unlike the spoken word is something which every person examines privately and judges calmly by his own intellectual standards not by what the man standing next to him thinks I know wrote Hitler that one is able to win people far more by the spoken than by the written word

Later he adds contemptuously For let it be said to all knights of the pen and to all the political dandies especially of today the greatest changes in this world have never yet been brought about by a loose quill! No the pen has always been reserved to motivate these changes theoretically

Luckily I am not out to change the world—that is being

done for me and at a great clip But I know that the free spirit of man is persistent in nature it recurs and has never successfully been wiped out by fire or flood I set down the above remarks merely (in the words of Mr Hitler) to motivate that spirit theoretically Being myself a knight of the goose quill I am under no misapprehension about "winning" people but I am inordinately proud these days of the quill for it has shown itself historically to be the hypodermic which inoculates men and keeps the germ of freedom always in circulation so that there are individuals in every time in every land who are the carriers the Typhoid Marys capable of infecting others by mere contact and example These persons are feared by every tyrant—who shows his fear by burning the books and destroying the individuals A writer goes about his task today with the extra satisfaction which comes from knowing that he will be the first to have his head lopped off—even before the political dandies In my own case this is a double satisfaction for if freedom were denied me by force of earthly circumstance I am the same as dead and would infinitely prefer to go into fascism without my head than with it having no use for it any more and not wishing to be saddled with so heavy an encumbrance.



## THEODORE PRATT

THEODORE PRATT was born in Minneapolis in 1901. He attended Colgate and Columbia without taking a degree. From the age of fifteen for eight years—including the time he was an undergraduate student—he was a newspaper correspondent or reporter. He spent three years as a reader of plays for the New York theatrical producer Winthrop Ames. This post was followed by a four year stint as European correspondent for the *New York Sun*. He became a free lance writer in 1933. He now lives in Florida and several of his dozen or more novels are vivid reflections of the Florida scene. *Big Blow* (1936)—also dramatized and produced on Broadway. *Mercy Island* (1941)—also produced as a moving picture. *The Barefoot Mailman* (1943). *The Flame Tree* (1950) a story of Palm Beach in its early days and *The Big Bubble* (1951) an account of the real estate boom of the 1920's are among these Florida novels. Under the pseudonym of Timothy Brace he has published murder mysteries. Short stories, plays, original motion pictures and articles are among his other writings. The accompanying selection is taken from a book which recounts entertaining episodes of life on the continent and at home in New York, Florida and California, *Perils in Provence and Other Ticklish Places* (1944).

### French and English Spoken

IN COLLEGE I flunked French 3 three times. This was not my fault. My professor admired France so passionately that he began each class by having the students sing *La Marseillaise*. Chanting a stirring foreign national anthem daily at eight o'clock in the morning confounded me so completely that I could never get a passing grade at the end of a semester.

Later in life I met my professor in Nice and when we had a drink together at a cafe I indulged in the low gesture of impressing him with my knowledge of colloquial French asking the waiter *Qu'est-ce c'est la taille?* or "What's the size?" in place of the more formal call for *l'addition* or the check. The professor had enough sense of humor to take out a pencil and mark on the marble table top a belated and ironical *A plus*.

This proud point was achieved only after some years' resi-

dence in France and many a horrible blunder involving the proper selection of words and their correct pronunciation. This if not executed in exactly the right way runs into the literal French spirit with devastating effect.

The first of my ghastly mistakes when learning the language at its source occurred during a fatal luncheon in a restaurant on the boulevard. I was to meet my wife at this place and we were to have lunch together. She was late and I was hungry so I went ahead with the meal. My French held up admirably through the first few courses. Then it failed me miserably. While the waiter hovered over me to take the order for my following course I ran my eye down the menu caught the listing *croquette* and informed the waiter that that was what I would have next. At least that is what I thought I told the waiter.

The dish was not long in being served and arrived at a propitious moment. Just as my wife entered the place and saw me an enthusiastic young *cocotte* seated herself beside me at the table.

This incident is still good for an open forum among the family.

Another large brick I dropped into this part of the French spirit had to do with the purchase of a *bidon* or can to carry an extra supply of gasoline in Belle. I entered the hardware store at the Beauprés and though the word was new to me I rather prided myself on my pronunciation of *bidon* when I got it off to Madame Beaupré. She nodded vigorously and I thought, even approvingly. But my astonishment and chagrin were acute when she led me over to a dazzling display of *bidets* those intimate articles of French plumbing which most Americans know are not primarily footbaths.

It is well known that sentiment can often lead to sad ends and this actuated the most effective of my mistakes achieved during the days when I was able to throw out, explosively only a word here and there in my linguistic agony. While staying overnight with my wife in a provincial French hotel I suddenly and luckily remembered that it was our wedding anniversary. To fulfill the obligations of the day I purchased a bouquet of flowers for my wife and before presenting it to her I tried to obtain a vase to put it in.

I called the *valet de chambre* who agreed when shown the flowers that they were very pretty but wasn't at all bright about going on from there about the matter. I then tried

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This proud point was achieved only after some years

Gambelle a grocery store and he wished to swear he said Son of beech! or even worse When I asked the lady presiding over the tobacco counter if I had put enough stamps on my letters she replied All right. Even the children on the street aped their elders One day we heard two black smocked young things calling to each other Goodebye! Monsieur le Comte began to greet me with an enthusiastic "ello!

It became no longer necessary either if we insisted on speaking French ourselves to the French to pronounce proper names correctly or with the right inflection to get any results Once upon a time when motoring in Belle we asked the way by saying *Quel est le chemin pour aller a Grasse?* and pronounced that city's name like grass we were met with a blank stare Then when we'd asked the same thing of the same person six times and the stare was no less blank, but increasingly hostile we said something about the city of perfumes there was a highly illuminating grimace and pointing out of our dreadful pronunciation to the effect of Ah hi Grabs!

Those dear dead days disappeared. We began just to go ahead with the question as usual or better asked How in hell do you get to Grasse? and almost any native pointed a knobby finger and said "Tat way

This sort of thing went hand in glove with what the French believed to be understanding of *étrangers* and their habits A good example was the little French physician who was linguistically exhibitionistic enough to insist upon speaking English with me By doing this he seemed to indicate that he knew all about me and my ways "Your woman he told me valiantly is altogether well He referred to my wife whom he had been treating for a mild complaint Of herself your woman is now independency he continued "So it happens you have some comment to make?

I told him that his ministrations had been efficient and good and that I was pleased with them. That however did not seem to be the comment he expected me to make His shoulders went up around his ears somewhere he looked at me and wted expectantly

Oh I said how much is your fee?"  
 His shoulders descended from his ears as he replied with the satisfaction of knowing that I was an American My charges is—are?—one thousand francs  
 When I expressed my shock at this exorbitant amount, he asked Is this too dear for your woman Monsieur?

my French to get the idea over *De l'eau!* I said *De l'eau!* The *valet de chambre* nodded and wanted to know if it was Vichy mineral water I wanted to drink I groaned and managed to remember that the word for vase was the same in French as it was in English and called it out But my pronunciation wasn't what it should have been and the *valet* only stood doubtfully

Thinking he was reluctant about wanting to furnish the desired object I tried to make it plain that its use would only be required for the night *Le nuit!* I shouted *Pour la nuit!* Some kind of light dawned in the dim brain of the *valet* and he uttered a comprehending "Ah hi" as only the French can express that exclamation But he seemed surprised and a puzzled look came into his face I insisted The *valet* started to object and I kept saying *Oui! Mais oui!* emphatically Finally though he shook his head the *valet* agreed and took the flowers to put them in a vase

The shrieks of my wife aroused a good portion of the hotel's guests when a little later the *valet de chambre* returned with the flowers daintily arranged in a *vase de nuit* otherwise and blushingly known as a chamberpot

The occasion for such contretemps was in time removed not by my proficiency in the language but by quite another thing When we first went to France to live it was necessary to speak French We even took lessons from a skeptical lady named Madame Garnier Rosset or at least we had French conversations with her during the infrequent moments she did not prefer to speak English All those efforts were ultimately wasted It became so that knowing the language was no longer a requirement In fact the best thing to do was to throw away your *French in Sixteen Annoying Minutes a Day* and forget all about it

For the French were hot after English What's more they were proud of achievement and showed it on every possible occasion It wasn't a question of adopting a few English words for their conversation—steack on menus being one of the first home following quickly after and then such things as businessman and "knock-out"—we found it pretty difficult to locate anyone with whom to speak the fast-dying language of the diplomats

Addressing Monsieur Clément de la Flore in French he replied in English ghastly to be sure but English When I used my best slang on the waiter at a cafe he now said *Tree francs Meestair* When something went wrong in Monsieur

student praises a friend's flower garden he may expect in reply "Do not panegyrisé its beauty so much and he should then say "Why now! A little flower interests me more than a great star And the smallest garden rose more than the whole firmament. Will you allow me to make a nosegay?"

If the student isn't feeling very well he is instructed to say "I am somewhat ailing. If he meets someone he has known before he must say "I know you again well." And if the student wishes to register sales resistance the *manuel* would have him bring forth "These are oratorical preludes sir very threatening to my purse."

I still look upon the Messieurs Boussus and Jaurrand as among the chief instigators forcing Franco-American amity at that time to remain solely a matter between the diplomats. Certainly if anything is to be deduced from the confusion they generated in one of their students the two gentlemen thrust apart instead of bringing together Armand the village dandy who had cheated his old father out of house and fortune and had never done a stroke of work in his life took to greeting us of an evening as he passed by on the road. Lifting his hat he would always reply to our *Bon soir* by saying gravely and proudly "Good morning."

Comment allez vous Monsieur?

O K. Bud



he was approaching 70 he rode round his property for four or five hours several days each week. It was not easy for him but it was not difficult either. He never thought whether a thing was easy or difficult. If it ought to be done it would be done. Besides he had always been strong. Although his hair was white and his eyes were dimming he stood a good six feet and weighed 210 pounds. He rose at four every morning. It was December now. Christmas was approaching. Snow was in the air. Frost and snow on the ground. This month he had been away from home on a toilsome but necessary trip, and in the hard weather he had been able to ride over his farms very seldom. Still he liked to see them whenever he could. The land was quiet yet a deal of work remained to be done.

There was much on the old gentleman's mind. His son had come home from college in some kind of disturbance and uneasiness unwilling to go back again. Perhaps he should be sent elsewhere—to Harvard or William and Mary? Perhaps he should have a private tutor?

Meanwhile in order to teach him habits of quiet and undistracted industry I can [the old gentleman wrote to a friend] and I believe I do keep him in his room a certain portion of the twenty-four hours. But even so nothing would substitute for the boy's own will power which was apparently defective. The grandchildren too were sometimes sick because they were spoiled. Not by their grandmother but by their mother indeed. She wrote to Fanny wife never spoiled anyone. I am sure there is nothing so pernicious as overcharging the stomach of a child.

He thought hard and long about the state of the nation. Although he had retired from politics he was often consulted and he kept closely in touch. One advantage of retirement was that it gave him time to think over general principles. Never an optimist he could usually see important dangers some time before they appeared to others. This December as he rode over the stiff clods under the pale sky he was thinking over two constant threats to his country. One was the danger of disputes between the separate States and the central government. (Congress had just passed a law designed to combat sedition and two of the States had immediately denounced it as unconstitutional. This could lead only to disaster.) The other problem was that respectable men were not entering public life. They seemed to prefer such a thing as riches to seek their private happiness as though such a thing were possible if the nation itself declined. The old gentleman



## GILBERT HIGHET

GILBERT ARTHUR HIGHET was born in Glasgow in 1906. He received a master's degree from Glasgow University in 1929 (and a Doctor of Letters degree in 1951). He was Craven Scholar and Chancellor's Prize-man at Oxford from 1929 to 1932, receiving a second master's degree. He has also received the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Case Institute of Technology. Immediately after graduation from Oxford he married Helen Clark MacLones, author during the past dozen years of several popular novels. From 1932 until 1938 he was fellow and tutor in classics at St. John's College, Oxford. The Highets came to the United States in 1937 when on leave of absence from Oxford he started his career at Columbia University as visiting associate in Classics. During the war years he was a member of a British mission in the United States and Canada and later in the British army. For a post-war year he was lieutenant colonel in military government in Germany. In 1950 he returned to the United States and to Columbia University where he became a professor of Latin. In 1951 he became a naturalized citizen of the United States. In 1949 he published *The Classical Tradition*, an erudite and readable account of the ways in which Greek and Latin influence has affected the art and literature of western Europe and America. In 1950 *The Art of Teaching*—genial and practical statements and illustrations of the essential qualities of a good teacher. In 1953 *People, Places and Books* and two books in 1954—*Man's Unconquerable Mind* and *The Migration of Ideas*. In 1952, he became chief book critic for *Harpers Magazine* but relinquished this post in the summer of 1954 to become a judge for the Book of the Month Club. His weekly book reviews broadcast by radio have delighted a wide audience. The following selection—a mid-twentieth-century and a Scottish born author's reflections on a historic American—is taken from *People, Places and Books*.

### The Old Gentleman

THE OLD GENTLEMAN was riding round his land. He had retired several years ago after a busy career but farming was what he liked and he knew that the best way to keep farms prosperous was to supervise them in person. So although

great assemblies some in happiness and some in anguish of soul none in despair

One of the worst was Christmas Day of twenty-one years before. That was early in the war a bad time. It snowed four inches on Christmas. His men were out in the open with no proper quarters. Although he started them on building shelters an aggressive move by the enemy made them stand to arms and interrupt all other work for nearly a week. And they had no decent uniforms no warm coats no strong shoes no regular supplies two days without meat three days without bread almost a quarter of his entire force unfit for duty. He was receiving no supplies from the government and he was actually meeting opposition from the locals. They had sent up a protest against keeping the troops in service during the winter. Apparently they thought you could raise an army whenever you needed one—not understanding that this little force was the only permanent barrier between them and foreign domination. He had replied with crushing energy to that protest. In a letter to the President of Congress he wrote

I can assure these gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fire side than to occupy a cold bleak hill and sleep under frost and snow without clothes or blankets. However although they seem to have a little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them and from my soul I pity those miseries which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent.

He ended with his well known strongly and graceful written signature G WASHINGTON

The year before that, 1776 things had been nearly as bad—the same difficulty about uniforms and supplies. Late in December he wrote earnestly from his camp. For godsake hurry with the clothing as nothing will contribute more to facilitate the recruiting service than warm & comfortable clothing to those who engage. The Commissary informs me that he cannot prevail on the millers to grind & that the troops in consequence are like to suffer for want of flour. This must be remedied by fair or other means. However his chief concern then was not supplies nor discipline nor

decided to write to Mr Henry whom he considered a sound man and urge him to re-enter politics he would surely be elected if he would consent to stand and then with his experience he could do much to bridge the gap between the federal government and the States

The old gentleman stopped his horse With that large cool comprehensive gaze which every visitor always remembered he looked round the land It was doing better Five years ago his farms had been almost ruined by neglect and greed During his long absence the foreman had cropped them too hard and omitted to cultivate and fertilize looking for quick and easy profits Still even before retiring he had set about restoring the ground to health and vigor first by feeding the soil as much as possible all year round second by a judicious succession of crops and third most important of all by careful regularity and constant application As he put it in a letter To establish good rules and a regular system is the life and soul of every kind of business Now the land was improving every year It was always a mistake to expect rapid returns To build up a nation and to make a farm out of the wilderness both needed long steady thoughtful determined application both were the work of the will

Long ago when he was only a boy he had copied out a set of rules to help in forming his manners and his character—in the same careful way as he would lay out a new estate or survey a recently purchased tract of land The last of the rules he still remembered *Keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called Conscience* Some of the philosophers said that the spark from heaven was reason the power of the intellect which we share with God The old gentleman did not quarrel with them but he did not believe them He knew that the divine fire in the spirit was the sense of duty the lawfulness which orders the whole universe the power of which a young poet then alive was soon to write

Thou dost preserve the fars from wrong  
And the most ancient heavens through Thee are fresh and strong

His mind turned back over his long and busy life He never dreamed or brooded but he liked to note things down to plan them and record them Now on this cold December day he could recall nearly every Christmas he had ever spent sixty at least Some were peaceful some were passed in deadly danger many in war some in strange lonely places some in

the United States of becoming a respectable nation I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task which however was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause the support of the supreme power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven.

So he said And the President of Congress replied in terms which although still balanced and baroque are more emotional and almost tender

We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the Almighty God beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of its citizens to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation And for you we address to him our earnest prayers that a life so beloved may be fostered with all his care that your days may be happy as they have been illustrious and that he will finally give you that reward which this world cannot give.

Next day Washington left for Mount Vernon and spent Christmas 1783 at home in peace

Some years passed December was always busy Washington was on horseback nearly every day riding round his place directing the operations which kept the land alive and fed all those who lived on it, ditching, threshing, hog killing, repairing walls, lifting potatoes, husking corn And it was a poor December when he did not have at least half a dozen days hunting though in that thickly wooded country he often lost his fox and sometimes hounds too For Christmas after Christmas in the eighties his diary shows him living the life of a peaceful squire and on the day itself usually entertaining friends and relatives On Christmas Eve 1788 Mr Madison stayed with him and was sent on to Colchester next day in Washington's carriage

Again a change Christmas 1789 saw him as the first President of the United States living in New York the capital of the Union, and receiving formal calls from diplomats and statesmen In the forenoon he attended St. Paul's Chapel in the afternoon Mrs. Washington received visitors not numerous but respectable and next day Washington rode out

defense but attack. On Christmas Day long before dawn he was crossing the Delaware River at Miconkeys Ferry with a striking force of over two thousand men. He spent Christmas morning marching to Trenton. Next day he attacked Colonel Rahl and his Hessians. Half of them were sleeping off their Christmas liquor and nearly all were paralyzed with drowsiness and astonishment. Hungry and hopeful the Americans burst in on them like wolves among fat cattle. The surprise was complete. The victory prepared on Christmas Day was the first real success of the war.

Two winters later at Christmas time Washington was in Philadelphia to discuss the plans for next year's campaign with a Congressional committee. People were very civil; they called him the Cincinnatus of America and some of them made an effort to take the war seriously. But many did not. He would rather have been in winter quarters with his men. A few days before Christmas 1778 he wrote to Mr. Harrison that as far as he could see most people were sunk in idleness, dissipation and extravagance. Speculation, peculation and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration and almost of every order of men.

Year after year he was in winter quarters at Christmas time usually in a simple farmhouse, neither vast nor commodious, in command of a starving and bankrupt army. In 1781 after Yorktown things were a trifle better and he had dinner with his wife and family at Mr. Morris's in Philadelphia amid general rejoicing. But the following Christmas was the blackest ever. He had thought of asking for leave to look after his long neglected private concerns but the army was very close to mutiny which would have meant the final loss of the war and the probable collapse of the entire nation. It was not only the enlisted men now, it was the officers, they were preparing to make a formal protest to Congress with a list of their grievances and only the personal influence of Washington himself only in earnest pleading and his absolute honesty and selflessness kept the little force in being through that winter.

Yet by Christmas the next year in 1783 it was all over. Washington said farewell to his officers and then on December 23rd he resigned his commission. His formal utterance still stands grand as a monument.

Happy in the confirmation of our Independence and Sovereignty and pleased with the opportunity afforded

after a physical collapse which looked very like an attack of consumption involving hemorrhage fever and a certain hollowness of the chest which never quite left him. He bore up as well as he could under the barrage of slander which his enemies poured in upon him, including the foulest of all, that he was accepting graft but he had been ill for months when he finally broke down. (Years later when he was appointed Commander in-Chief he was offered a regular salary but refused to accept it. Instead he asked Congress to pay his expenses he kept the accounts scrupulously and he presented them without extras at the end of the war. Slanders are always raised about great men but this one slander was never leveled at Washington again.)

He looked back beyond that to one of the hardest Christmases in his memory. That was the Christmas of 1753 when he was only 21. Governor Dinwiddie had determined to stop the encirclement of Virginia. The French were building forts on the Ohio and arresting traders from the British colonies who penetrated that territory. Soon there would be nothing westward except a ring of hostile Indians supported by arrogant French officers. Isolated by land the colonies could later have been cut off by sea, too and the seed would have withered almost before it struck firm root.

The governor commissioned young Major Washington to make his way to the French fort, to deliver a letter from him to the French commandant, and to bring back both a reply and an estimate of the situation. He did but he was very nearly killed. Not by the French. Or not directly. They merely told him that they were absolutely determined to take possession of the Ohio territory and returned a diplomatic but unsatisfactory reply to the governor's letter. Still, Major Washington had at least the substance of a good intelligence report, for he had inspected the fort and his men had observed how many canoes the French were building. He had only to return. The French, however, endeavored to persuade him to go up and interview the governor of French Canada and, that failing set about bribing the Indians in his party with liquor and guns either to leave him altogether or to delay until the worst of the winter when travel would be impossible for months. But Washington had a good guide he was friendly with the Indian chief and he had a tireless will. He set off on the return journey about the third week in December when snow was already falling heavily mixed with rain. Six days were spent on a river full of ice. The canoes began to give out. The

to take his exercise (He and Theodore Roosevelt were probably the finest horsemen of all our Presidents those who knew him best liked to think of him on horseback the most graceful rider in the country) But for years thereafter his exercise was cut short and his days were swallowed up in the constant crowding of business He rarely saw his land and seldom visited his home His Christmases were formal and public brilliant but not warm not holidays

But now after his final retirement he had time to look back on earlier Christmases Some of them were very strange Christmas of 1751 he had spent at sea His elder brother Lawrence frail and overworked sailed to Barbados for a winter cruise and George accompanied him On November 3rd they landed at Bridgetown and were invited to dine next day with Major Clarke O C British forces Washington observed gravely to his diary We went—myself with some reluctance as the smallpox was in his family Less than two weeks later Washington was down with smallpox which kept him in bed for nearly a month but he recovered with very few marks By December 25th he and his brother were sailing back past the Leeward Islands As he liked to do all through his life he noted the weather ( fine clear and pleasant with moderate sea ) and the situation latitude 18 30 ) and with a youthful exuberance which he soon lost he adds We dined on a fat Irish goose Beef & & and drank a health to our absent friends

Five years later he was a colonel engaged in one of the wars that helped to make this continent Anglo-Saxon instead of Latin the war to keep the French pressing downward along the Ohio from Canada and upward along the Mississippi from New Orleans from encircling the British colonies in an enclave along the coast and cutting them off forever from the wealth of the plains the rivers and the distant fabulous Pacific Those two Christmases Washington could recall as a time of profound depression filled with the things he hated most anarchic competition and anarchic indiscipline He commanded a Virginian regiment and Captain Dagworthy of the Maryland troops at Fort Cumberland would not supply him He despised drunkenness and slack soldiering and he would not tolerate the attempts by the liquor trade to batten on his troops and run local elections by handing out free liquor His enemies beat him temporarily not by bending his will but by wrecking his health Christmas 1757 saw him on leave

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horses foundered The rest of the party went more and more slowly Major Washington put himself in Indian walking dress and pushed on on foot On Christmas Day he was making his way toward the Great Beaver Creek Next day he left the entire party to follow with horses money and baggage and set out alone with the guide Christopher Gist

Next day a lone Indian who pretended to know the territory but who was evidently a French agent spent some hours leading the two men off their route and finally shot at the young officer from close range Gist would have killed him but Washington would not allow it they kept him for several hours and then let him go Then they pressed on eastward They had to cross the swollen ice jammed Allegheny River They built a raft but they could force it only halfway through the roaring current and the hammering ice blocks That night they spent freezing on an island in midstream In the morning they struggled across on the ice and pressed on again In his journal the guide recorded that the major was much fatigued But still he kept going eighteen miles a day with a gun and a full pack over rough territory threatened by hostile Indians in mid December with snow and rain falling from the sky and lying thick on the ground

Now over a period of forty five years he looked back on that Christmas It had been he remembered as fatiguing a journey as it is possible to conceive —and still a necessary one It was the first of his many services to his country to keep it from being surrounded and strangled from without or poisoned from within And he reflected that it is not necessary to try to be brave or clever or generous or beloved or even happy It is necessary simply to do one's duty All else flows from that Without that all else is useless

Darkness closed in early in these winter days It was getting toward Christmas of the year 1798 General Charles Pinckney and his lady were expected for Christmas dinner The old gentleman finished looking over the land and turned homeward. He paid no heed to the cold

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